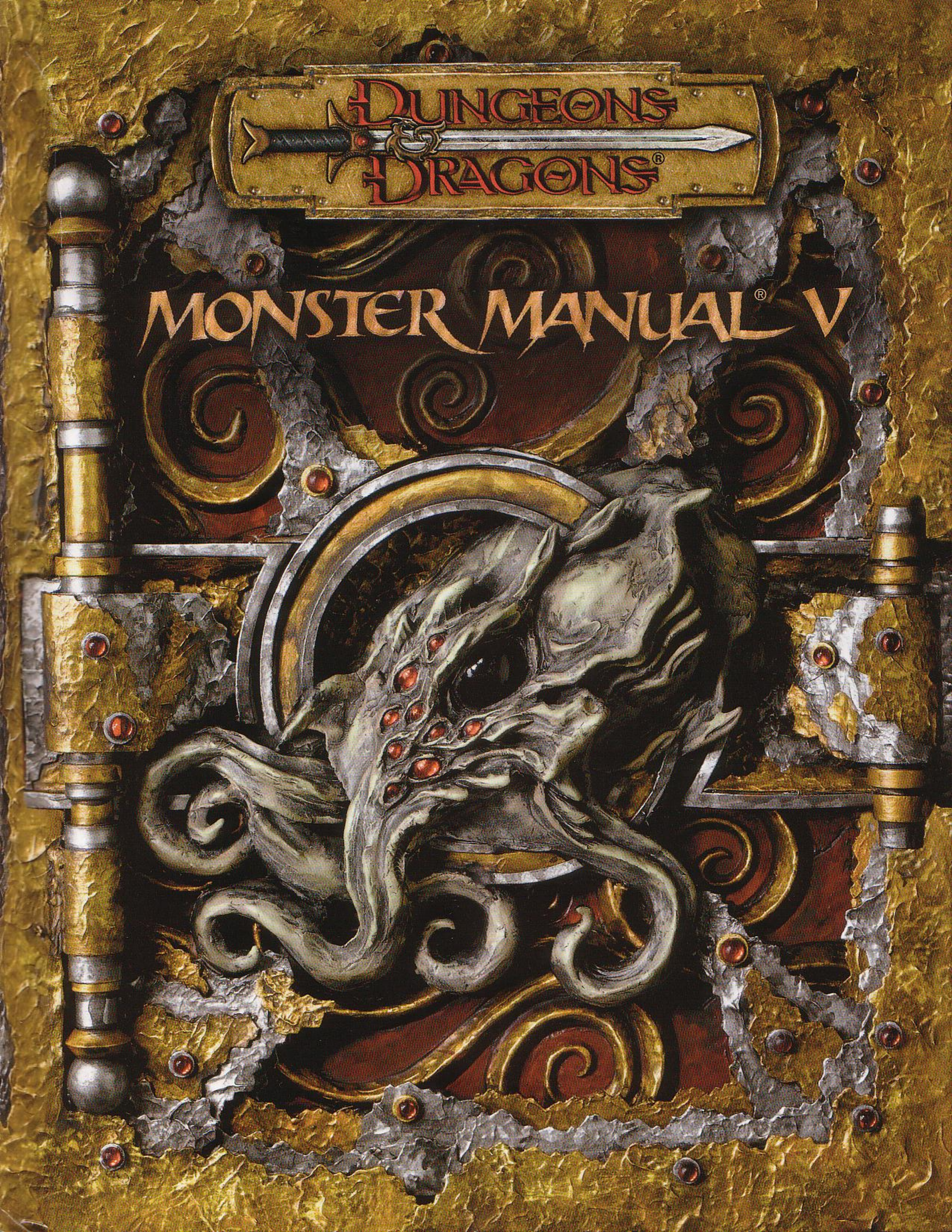
DUNGEONS & DRAGONS®

MONSTER MANUAL® V



DUNGEONS & DRAGONS®

MONSTER MANUAL® V

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Contents

- **Monsters by Challenge Rating** 4
- **Monsters by ECL** 4
- **Introduction** 5
  - Reading the Entries 5

The Monsters

- Arcadian Avenger 8
- Banshrae 10
- Blackwing 12
- Burrow Root 14
- Dalmosh 16
- Deadborn Vulture 18
  - Deadborn Vulture Zombie 18
- Demon 20
  - Adaru 20
  - Carnage Demon 22
  - Draudnu 24
  - Gadacro 26
  - Solamith 28
- Demonthorn Mandrake 30
- Devil 32
  - Gulthir 32
  - Remmanon 34
  - Stitched Devil 36
- Dragons of the Great Game 38
  - Chorranathau the Inscrutable 40
  - Morlicantha 42
  - Singh the Immense 45
- Elemental Mage 48
  - Ken-Kuni 48
  - Ken-Li 48
  - Ken-Sun 49
- Ember Guard 52
- Ethereal Defiler 54
- Fetid Fungus 56
- Frostwind Virago 58
- Garngrath 60
- Gem Scarab 62
- God-Blooded 64
  - Nozgûg, Gruumsh-Blooded Orc 64
  - Creating God-Blooded Templates 67
- Golem 68
  - Force Golem 68
  - Magmacore Golem 70
- Graveyard Sludge 72
- Greenspawn Zealot 74
- Guulvorg 76
- Haunt 78
  - Bridge Haunt 78
  - Forest Haunt 80
  - Taunting Haunt 82
- Hobgoblin 84
  - Hobgoblin Duskblade 84
  - Hobgoblin Spellscourge 85
  - Hobgoblin Warcaster 86
  - Hobgoblin Warsoul 87
- Illurien 90
- Jaebrin 92
- Kuo-toa 94
  - Kuo-toa, Crazed 94
  - Kuo-toa Exalted Whip 95
  - Kuo-toa Harpooner 96
  - Kuo-toa Monitor 97
- Malastor 100
- Merchurion 102
- Mind Flayers of Thoon 104
  - Thoon Disciple 104
  - Shadow Flayer 107
  - Thoon Infiltrator 109
  - Thoon Thrall 111
  - Thoon Soldier 113
  - Madcrafter of Thoon 114
  - Scyther of Thoon 116
  - Stormcloud of Thoon 118
  - Thoon Hulk 120
  - Thoon Elder Brain 121
- Mockery Bug 126
  - Mockery Monarch 126
  - Mockery Drone 127
- Phantom 130
  - Kugan, Phantom Ghast Ninja 130
- Ruin Chanter 132
- Ruin Elemental 134
- Rylkar 136
  - Rylkar Harridan 136
  - Rylkar Madclaw 137
  - Rylkar Tormentor 138
  - Rylkspawn Swarm 138
- Sanguineous Drinker 142
- Scouring Construct 144
  - Scouring Slinger 144
  - Slinger Scorpion 145
  - Scouring Stanchion 145
- Shaedling 148
- Shardsoul Slayer 150
- Siege Beetle 152
- Skull Lord 154
  - Skull Lord 154
  - Bonespur 156
  - Serpentir 158
  - Spectral Rider 160
- Spawn of Juiblex 162
  - Lesser Spawn of Juiblex 162
  - Greater Spawn of Juiblex 163
  - Elder Spawn of Juiblex 164
- Spirrax 166
- Steelwing 168
- Thrym Hound 170
- Tirbana 172
  - Tirbana Eyewing 172
  - Tirbana Drowser 173
  - Tirbana Slayer 173
  - Tirbana Spawner 174
- Troll, Bladerager 180
- Tusk Terror 182
- Ushemoi 184
  - Arkamoi 184
  - Hadrimoi 185
  - Lashemoi 186
  - Turlemoi 188
- Vampire 190
  - The Black Duke 190
  - The Red Widow 193
- Verdant Reaver 196
- Vinespawn 198
- Vivisector 200
- Wild Hunt 202
  - Master of the Hunt 202
  - Hound of the Hunt 202

- **Monster Feats** 204

- **Glossary** 206

- **Monsters by Type (and Subtype)** 222

Feats

- Battle Magic Tactics 84
- Brutal Throw 134
- Daunting Presence 80
- Kuo-Toan Monasticism 97
- Mage Slayer 85
- Mind-Shattering Strike 97
- Sense Quintessence 110

Spell

- Earthbind 26

Templates

- God-Blooded 65
- Gruumsh-Blooded 65
- Imix-Blooded 65
- Kord-Blooded 66
- Orcus-Blooded 66
- Phantom 130
- Thoon Thrall 112
- Vecna-Blooded 66
- Yeenoghu-Blooded 67
- Xorvintaal Dragon 43
- Xorvintaal Exarch 47

For Player Characters

Creatable Creatures

- Blackwing (*create undead*) 13
- Bonespur (*create undead*) 156
- Force Golem (construct) 69
- Magmacore Golem (construct) 71
- Sanguineous Drinker (*create undead*) 143
- Scouring Slinger (construct) 147
- Scouring Stanchion (construct) 147
- Serpentir (*create undead*) 159
- Shardsoul Slayer (construct) 151
- Spectral Rider (*create greater undead*) 161

Mounts/Companion Creatures

- Blackwing 13
- Deadborn Vulture 19
- Gem Scarab (Improved Familiar) 63
- Steelwing 169
- Tirbana Eyewing (Improved Familiar) 172

Race

- Jaebrin 93

Summonable Creatures

- Arcadian Avenger (IV) [1] 9
- Demon, Adaru (IX) [1] 22
- Demon, Carnage (IV) [1] 24
- Demon, Gadacro (IV) [1] 28
- Demon, Solamith (VII) [1] 29
- Devil, Gulthir (VI) [1] 33
- Fetid Fungus (II) [2] 57

[1] Requires a *summon monster* spell.

[2] Requires a *summon monster* or *summon nature's ally* spell.

Items

- Kuo-Toan Harpoon 96
- Razorfeather Ammuntion 169
- Siege Chitin Armor 153
- Howling Helm 191

MONSTERS BY CR

Monster	CR
Tirbana eyewing	1/2
Fetid fungus	1
Jaebrin	1
Ushemoi, lashemoi	1
Gem scarab	2
Shaedling	2
Tirbana drowser	2
Demon, gadacro	3
Hobgoblin duskblade	3
Kuo-toa, crazed	3
Mind Flayer of Thoon, Thoon thrall	3
Rylkar madclaw	3
Skull lord, bonespur	3
Demon, carnage	4
Golem, force	4
Golem, magmacore	4
Graveyard sludge	4
Haunt, taunting	4
Hobgoblin warcaster	4
Kuo-toa harpooner	4
Rylkspawn swarm	4
Skull lord, serpentir	4
Tirbana slayer	4
Ushemoi, arkamoi	4
Vivisector	4
Demonthorn mandrake	5
Greenspawn zealot	5
Hobgoblin spellscourge	5
Mind Flayer of Thoon, Thoon infiltrator	5
Mind Flayer of Thoon, stormcloud of Thoon	5
Sanguineous drinker	5
Shardsoul slayer	5
Tirbana spawner	5
Ushemoi, hadrimoi	5
Verdant reaver	5
Arcadian avenger	6
Deadborn vulture zombie	6
Devil, gulthir	6
Kuo-toa monitor	6
Mind Flayer of Thoon, scyther of Thoon	6
Rylkar tormentor	6
Skull lord, spectral rider	6
Spawn of Juiblex, lesser	6
Haunt, bridge	7
Kugan, phantom ghast ninja	7
Kuo-toa exalted whip	7
Skull lord	7
Vinespawn	7
Banshrae	8
Blackwing	8
Burrow root	8
Deadborn vulture	8
Demon, solamith	8
Elemental magi, ken-kuni	8
God-blooded, Nozgûg	8
Hobgoblin warsoul	8
Mind Flayer of Thoon, shadow flayer	8
Mind Flayer of Thoon, Thoon soldier	8
Troll, bladerager	8
Tusk terror	8
Ushemoi, turlemoi	8
Devil, stitched	9
Mockery bug, mockery drone	9
Rylkar harridan	9
Demon, adaru	10
Demon, draudnu	10
Elemental magi, ken-li	10
Haunt, forest	10
Mind Flayer of Thoon, madcrafter of Thoon	10
Mind Flayer of Thoon, Thoon disciple	10
Ruin elemental	10
Spawn of Juiblex, greater	10
Thrym hound	10
Dragons of the great game, Morlicantha	13
Elemental magi, ken-sun	13
Ember guard	13
Guulvorg	13
Mind Flayer of Thoon, Thoon hulk	13
Dragons of the great game, Singh the Immense	14
Mockery bug, mockery monarch	14
Ruin chanter	14
Spawn of Juiblex, elder	14
Steelwing	14
Devil, remmanon	15
Illurien	15
Mind Flayer of Thoon, Thoon elder brain	15
Ethereal defiler	16
Frostwind virago	16
Malastor	16
Siege beetle	16
Dalmosh	17
Merchurion	17
Vampire, Red Widow	17
Dragons of the great game, Chorranathau	18
Scouring construct, scouring slinger	18
Scouring construct, scouring stanchion	18
Spirrax	18
Wild hunt, hound of the hunt	18
Vampire, Black Duke	19
Garngrath	20
Wild Hunt, master of the hunt	22

MONSTERS BY ECL

Monster	HD	LA	ECL
Arcadian avenger	8	2	10
Banshrae	15	4	19
Elemental magi:			
Ken-kuni	8	5	13
Ken-li	12	5	17
Ken-sun	17	5	22
Ethereal defiler	22	4	26
Greenspawn zealot	6	2	8
Hobgoblin:			
Duskblade	3	1	4
Spellscourge	5	2	7
Warcaster	4	3	7
Warsoul	10	4	14
Jaebrin	1	1	2
Kuo-toa:			
Crazed	4	3	7
Exalted whip	10	4	14
Harpooner	4	3	7
Monitor	6	3	9
Nozgûg	7	1	8
Shaedling	4	3	7
Singh the Immense	13	2	15
Troll, bladerager	6	5	11
Ushemoi:			
Arkamoi	4	4	8
Hadrimoi	9	4	13
Lashemoi	2	2	4
Turlemoi	12	4	16

Introduction

Welcome to *Monster Manual V*. This book contains new creatures for use in the Dungeons & Dragons® game. The monster entries are generally alphabetical by name, but closely related monsters are grouped together under a single heading. In addition to the table of contents at the front of this book, monsters are listed by type and subtype on page 222, and by Challenge Rating and ECL on page 4.

This introduction explains how to read each creature's entry. Refer to the glossary on pages 206–222 for definitions of terms you are not familiar with.

READING THE ENTRIES

Each monster entry is organized in the same format, as outlined below. For complete information about the characteristics of monsters, consult the glossary of this book, the *Player's Handbook* (*PH*), or the *Dungeon Master's Guide* (*DMG*).

We want this book to be as useful to DMs as possible, so the statistics are presented in a format that makes them easier to use right off the page. This format is divided into five sections separated by horizontal lines. Each section serves a specific purpose; you need to reference different sections at different times during an encounter.

IDENTIFICATION AND ENCOUNTER

The top section identifies the creature and gives the information you need at the start of an encounter.

Name: This word or phrase identifies the creature.

CR: This value is the Challenge Rating of an individual creature of this kind.

Race, Class, and Level: This information is provided only for creatures that have class levels.

Alignment: The one- or two-letter abbreviation that appears here denotes the creature's alignment. A term that describes how likely this alignment is to apply, as defined in the glossary, might also appear here. Specific NPCs don't include the extra term.

Size and Type: The creature's size category and its type (and subtype or subtypes, if applicable) are given here.

Init: This value is the creature's modifier on initiative checks.

Senses: The Senses entry indicates whether the creature has darkvision, low-light vision, scent, or some other sensory special quality, along with the creature's modifiers on Listen and Spot checks (even if the creature has no ranks in those skills).

Aura: This indicates special abilities that take effect anytime another creature comes within a certain distance, such as a devil's fear aura.

Languages: This entry gives the languages the creature speaks or understands, as well as any special abilities relating to communication (such as telepathy or an inability to speak).

DEFENSIVE INFORMATION

This section provides the information you need when characters are attacking the creature.

AC: This entry gives the creature's Armor Class against most attacks, followed by its AC against touch attacks and its AC when flat-footed. If the creature has feats or other abilities that modify its Armor Class under specific circumstances (such as the Mobility feat), they are noted here.

hp: This entry consists of the creature's full normal hit point total (usually average rolls on each Hit Die), followed by the creature's Hit Dice in parentheses. If the creature has fast healing, regeneration, damage reduction (DR), or some other ability that affects the amount of damage it takes or the rate at which it regains hit points, that information also appears here.

Immune: Any immunities the creature has are indicated here. This includes immunity to specific types of energy as well as other immunities (such as immunity to poison or to *sleep* effects).

Resist and SR: If the creature has resistance to certain kinds of attacks, that information is given here. The creature's spell resistance, if any, appears after the other resistances on the same line.

Fort, Ref, Will: This entry gives the creature's saving throw modifiers. Altered saving throw bonuses for specific circumstances also appear on this line.

Weakness: This entry details any weaknesses or vulnerabilities the creature has, such as light sensitivity or vulnerability to a type of energy.

OFFENSIVE INFORMATION

Refer to this section when it's the creature's turn to act in combat. All a creature's combat options are detailed here, even those that are not strictly offensive.

Speed: This entry begins with the creature's base land speed in feet and in squares on the battle grid, followed by speeds for other modes of movement, if applicable.

Melee/Ranged: Typically, these entries give all the physical attacks the creature can make when taking a full attack action. The first attack described is the creature's preferred form of attack, usually a melee attack of some sort but possibly (as in the example below) a ranged attack. If the creature can make only a single attack (for instance, when it is taking an attack action), use the first indicated attack bonus. Occasionally, a creature has separate options indicated for single attacks and for full attacks. For example, a Small creature with the Manyshot and Rapid Shot feats might have the following entries:

Melee masterwork longsword +8/+3 (1d6/19–20)
Ranged *+1 longbow* +8 (2d6+2/×3) with Manyshot or
Ranged *+1 longbow* +10/+10/+5 (1d6+1/×3) with Rapid Shot

Each set of attack routines is prefaced by a boldface word indicating whether the attacks are melee or ranged. Next comes the weapon used for the attack, the modified attack bonus, the amount of damage the attack deals, and information about critical hits. If the weapon has the "default" critical hit characteristics (threat on a 20 and ×2 damage), this portion of the entry is omitted.

Space and Reach: These entries define how large an area the creature takes up on the battle grid, as well as how far a creature's natural reach extends and any reach weapons it might use.

Base Atk: The Base Atk entry gives the creature's base attack bonus without any modifiers.

Grp: This entry gives the creature's grapple modifier.

Atk Options: Special abilities that the creature can employ to modify its normal attacks appear here. Such abilities might include feats such as Power Attack or special abilities such as smite evil.

Special Actions: This entry gives any special actions that the creature can take on its turn in place of making attacks.

Combat Gear: Possessions that the creature can use an action to employ on its turn appear here. Such items might include doses of poison (applied poisons, not natural ones), scrolls, potions, oils, wands, staffs, rods, and other wondrous items.

Spells Known or Spells Prepared: This entry appears for spellcasters. It occurs as "spells known" for sorcerers and members of other classes who do not prepare spells, and "spells prepared" for wizards, clerics, and others who do prepare them in advance. It begins with the creature's caster level for spells. If a creature's rolls to overcome spell resistance are based on a number other than its caster level (because of the Spell Penetration feat, for example), the creature's total modifier is given after the expression "spell pen." Spells known are detailed from highest level to 0 level, and each includes an attack bonus and a saving throw DC, if appropriate. If the character casts some spells at a different caster level than others, that information is also specified here.

A cleric's statistics block also includes the name of his deity (if applicable) and the domains to which he has access. Each domain spell he has prepared is marked with a superscript D. The granted powers of his domains might appear as combat options or resistances, or not at all if they only modify information presented elsewhere.

Spell-Like Abilities: Any spell-like abilities the creature possesses appear here. The entry begins with the creature's caster level for these abilities. As with spells, this entry includes attack bonuses and saving throw DCs when appropriate.

OTHER INFORMATION

Information presented in this section is rarely specifically relevant during an encounter, but it's useful for other purposes.

Abilities: The creature's ability scores appear here in the customary order (Str, Dex, Con, Int, Wis, Cha).

SA: For the purpose of determining the effect of feats and the application of templates, the creature's special attacks are given here even if they appear elsewhere in the statistics block. Specific NPCs don't include this information.

SQ: Only those special qualities not shown elsewhere in the statistics block are included here. For each creature, special qualities include any abilities that aren't delineated as special attacks.

Feats: This entry lists all the feats the creature possesses, including those that appear elsewhere in the statistics block.

Skills: This entry shows all the skill modifiers for skills in which the creature has ranks. Modifiers are also provided for skills to which racial modifiers, bonuses from synergy, or other modifiers apply, even if the creature has no ranks in those skills.

Possessions: This entry lists the items the creature is wearing or carrying that aren't considered combat gear. If the creature has combat gear, the expression "combat gear plus" appears to remind you to refer to the Combat Gear entry.

Spellbook: This entry gives the spells in the creature's spellbook, if it has one. The notation "spells prepared plus" indicates that the spells the creature has prepared are part of this list, but those spells are not reiterated here.

SPECIAL ABILITY DESCRIPTIONS

The final portion of the statistics block consists of paragraphs explaining special abilities noted earlier. When you're running a monster, it's good to be familiar with these descriptions beforehand. However, they are written for ease of use and include important information such as save DCs and damage.

STRATEGIES AND TACTICS

This section contains guidance for running the creature. Does the creature favor charging into combat or attacking at range? Does it prefer weapons or spells?

SAMPLE ENCOUNTERS

This section briefly describes the groups a creature forms and the relationship it might have to other creatures. Is it a solitary monster, or does it tend to gather in hordes? Sample encounters detail the Encounter Levels of groups or even specific adventure seeds.

ECOLOGY

Where does the creature live? What does it hunt or eat? What hunts or eats it? When appropriate, the ecology section offers insights into the creature's life cycle.

Environment: Specific terms to describe climate (warm, temperate, or cold) and terrain (plains, hills, forests, marshes, mountains, or deserts) are used to let you know where a creature prefers to live. Some creatures are subterranean. Others have no place in the natural environment (particularly constructs and undead) and might be found anywhere. Extraplanar outsiders are assigned a plane of origin.

Typical Physical Characteristics: This section states the average height of a bipedal creature, or whatever's most appropriate for a nonbipedal one, and the creature's weight. It discusses any significant physical differences between ages or genders.

Alignment: The creature's statistics block indicates its alignment. Here is a discussion of the creature's philosophy or its general behavior within the gamut that an alignment offers.

LORE

Monster Manual V offers a table of lore with each monster's entry. That lore can be gleaned by a character who makes an appropriate Knowledge check. The baseline DC to identify a monster and remember one bit of information about its special abilities or vulnerabilities is equal to 10 + the monster's CR. (This is a change from the description of the Knowledge skill, *PH* 78.) As can be seen on individual tables in the monster entries, every 5 points by which the check result exceeds the DC yields another piece of information. Information specific to the creature, such as its type of damage reduction, spell-like abilities, or immunities, comes with higher check results.

The preceding rule addresses specific creatures well, but more can to be said about creatures of general types. Consider the adaru demon (page 20) as an example. It's a CR 10 creature. Identifying it specifically requires a successful DC 20 Knowledge (the planes) check. However, since lowly CR 2 demons such as the dretch are out there, sharing outsider and tanar'ri traits with the adaru, it's reasonable to assume that identifying those outsider and tanar'ri traits is a relatively easy task.

Except when otherwise noted, an appropriate and successful DC 15 Knowledge check reveals all of a creature's type and subtype traits as defined in the glossary. This often includes information about energy resistance or various immunities. For instance, a DC 15 Knowledge (arcana) check reveals that dragons are hard to kill (12-sided HD) and resilient (all good saves). They have darkvision out to 60 feet and low-light vision, and they are immune to *sleep* effects and paralysis effects. They eat, sleep, and breathe.

SOCIETY

Intelligent creatures often form societies and have particular worldviews. Here are details about their thoughts, social interactions, religion, and government. How do creatures view themselves, each other, and other races? What do they value? What's "normal" for them?

SAMPLE LAIR

Some creatures (the rylkars and the tirbanas) have an entry showing a sample lair complete with area descriptions.

TYPICAL TREASURE

This information expresses typical treasure values and treasure preferences. Some creatures don't have treasure. Others have their treasure merely expressed in their Possessions entries. This section of the description is where you can find more information if it applies. For cultured societies, sample art objects, jewelry, and other creature-specific flavor pieces might be described.

A creature that has been advanced by class levels has treasure equal to an NPC of its Challenge Rating, not its ECL.

CREATURES AS CHARACTERS

If a creature offers exciting possibilities for play as a character, this section provides the statistics and level adjustment.

CREATURES WITH CLASS LEVELS

If the creature advances by class, but is not suitable for play as a character, this section discusses its favored class and associated classes (if any), and it might offer information about its deity and domains or other class-based information.

ADVANCED CREATURES

If a creature advances by Hit Dice, the Advancement line in its statistics block gives the break points. This section of the description, when present, discusses the whys and wherefores of the creature's increased size and abilities. For example, given a subterranean creature, are the larger specimens found deeper in the earth? Is its growth a result of good feeding, good environment, age, or simple happenstance?

FOR PLAYER CHARACTERS

If the creature can be useful to a player character as an animal companion, familiar, planar ally, mount, or summoned monster, relevant information is included here.

CREATURES IN EBERRON OR CREATURES IN FAERÛN

These sections (not present for every creature) describe the creature's niche in the EBERRON campaign setting or in the FORGOTTEN REALMS campaign setting.

ARCADIAN AVENGER

A female with angular features and bright, metallic flesh stalks toward you, her wings as sharp and threatening as her two readied swords. Each of her movements is framed by perfect symmetry—she never moves her right blade forward without moving the left blade back in equal measure. Sparing a glance for each part of the room in turn, she starts the cycle over again.

ARCADIAN AVENGER **CR 6**

Usually LG Medium outsider (extraplanar, good, lawful)
Init +6; **Senses** darkvision 60 ft.; Listen +12, Spot +12
Languages Celestial, Common

AC 19, touch 12, flat-footed 17
(+2 Dex, +1 shield, +6 natural)
hp 60 (8 HD)
Fort +9, **Ref** +8, **Will** +7

Speed 30 ft. (6 squares); fly 30 ft. (good)
Melee mwk longsword +12/+7 (1d8+3/19–20) or
Melee mwk longsword +8/+3 (1d8+3/19–20) and mwk longsword +8 (1d8+1/19–20)
Space 5 ft.; **Reach** 5 ft.
Base Atk +8; **Grp** +11
Atk Options aligned strike (lawful, good), blade rend, magic strike, wrath
Special Actions elude chance

Abilities Str 16, Dex 15, Con 16, Int 10, Wis 12, Cha 12
SA aligned strike, blade rend, elude chance, magic strike, wrath
Feats Improved Initiative, Two-Weapon Defense, Two-Weapon Fighting
Skills Balance +13, Diplomacy +14, Heal +12, Intimidate +12, Knowledge (the planes) +11, Listen +12, Sense Motive +12, Spot +12
Advancement by character class; **Favored Class** crusader; see text
Possessions 2 masterwork longswords

Blade Rend (Ex) If an Arcadian avenger hits a single target with at least one attack from each of her swords during a full attack, she deals an extra 2d6 points of damage.

Wrath (Ex) Any time the Arcadian avenger sees an ally fall in battle, she gains a +2 morale bonus on melee damage rolls. The bonus lasts for 1 minute.

Elude Chance (Su) Three times per day, as an immediate action, an Arcadian avenger can tap directly into the power of law, allowing her to avoid the uncertainty of chance. When an Arcadian avenger activates this ability, her next melee attack or saving throw is treated as if the result of the die roll were 10.

Arcadian avengers populate the grand legions of Arcadia, providing the force necessary to protect the utopian plane. Although they have humanoid features, Arcadian avengers spring forth from the pure forces of law, and as such their outlook and thoughts are as alien to the mortal races as are those of demons and devils. Arcadian avengers see all situations as a series of applied rules, and are free of hesitation, doubt, and remorse. Because of this, they come into conflict even with good creatures that have broken rules or laws.

STRATEGIES AND TACTICS

Arcadian avengers approach combat as a systematic series of calculations, constantly assessing the most logical means of attack. They weigh each foe's ability to harm them and balance that against their ability to take that foe down quickly. This usually means that Arcadian avengers focus first on spellcasters and other nonmelee types, attempting to nullify these powerful figures before they can unleash their magic. An Arcadian avenger spends a round measuring her ability to hit a foe before employing her elude chance ability—her preferred tactic is to wait until she has hit with her first attack in a round and then use elude chance to ensure that her blade rend ability affects the foe.

Multiple Arcadian avengers move in perfect concert, using 5-foot adjustments to create situations when each flanks a foe she is attacking.

SAMPLE ENCOUNTER

Arcadian avengers are usually encountered with a spellcaster or other creature capable of summoning them away from Arcadia. They are drawn to outbreaks of chaos and disorder, and they find their way to mortal realms more frequently in times of strife and war.

Punishers (EL 10): A group of four Arcadian avengers has been sent to apprehend the party because of a past action that disturbed law or order. The characters must decide whether to fight the avengers. To avoid doing so, they need to find some way to atone for their crimes.

ECOLOGY

Arcadian avengers defend the perfect harmony of Arcadia, specifically the lawful edicts of that plane. With their strict code of conduct and adherence to law over good, it would seem at first that Arcadian avengers should be more at home within the rigid lockstep of Mechanus than as a part of the

ARCADIAN AVENGER LORE

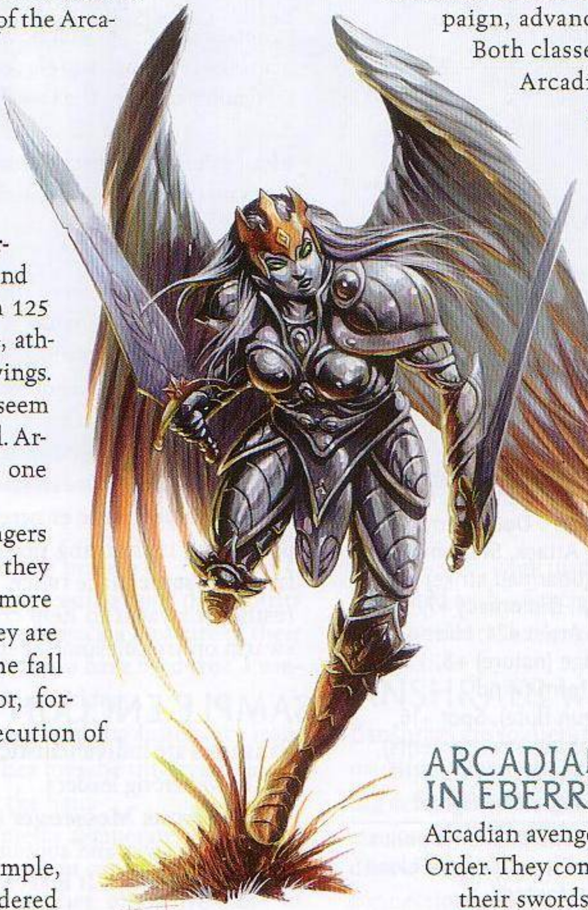
Characters who have ranks in Knowledge (the planes) can learn more about Arcadian avengers. When a character makes a successful skill check, the following lore is revealed, including the information from lower DCs.

Knowledge (the Planes)

DC	Result
16	This creature is a lawful good outsider called an Arcadian avenger. Such creatures are the primary soldiers in the legions that defend Arcadia.
21	Arcadian avengers are dangerous in melee combat. Their attacks become more powerful if one of their allies is slain. They can be summoned to serve lawful creatures.
26	Their affinity with law allows Arcadian avengers to strike more reliably.

peaceful harmony of Arcadia. Certainly, their extreme views on law occasionally bring them in conflict with other forces of good. These incidents are rare, however, since the avengers hold to the ideals of Arcadia, where laws are created for the greater good. It is in mortal realms where Arcadian avengers often find these forces at odds.

Environment: Arcadian avengers are extraplanar creatures from the Peaceable Kingdoms of Arcadia. They live there in great barracks, as befits their role in the legions that defend the plane. However, like all areas of Arcadia, the military housing of the Arcadian avengers is beautiful by almost any standard, with practice yards and training areas set amid carefully sculpted gardens and orderly rows of flowering trees.



Arcadian avenger

Typical Physical Characteristics: Arcadian avengers all stand 5 feet 8 inches tall and weigh 125 pounds, resembling attractive, athletic female humans with full wings. Their flesh, wings, and armor seem made of the same silvery metal. Arcadian avengers are similar to one another in appearance.

Alignment: Arcadian avengers are benevolent and helpful, but they see adherence to the rules as more important than kindness. They are usually lawful good, but some fall into lawful neutral behavior, forgoing compassion in the execution of their duties.

SOCIETY

Arcadian avengers live a simple, ascetic lifestyle among the ordered bounty of Arcadia. Their lives are as structured as the laws they defend. Arcadian avengers are divided into legions, and each legion is given a specific task that defines its purpose within the grand armies of law. The avengers are perfect embodiments of the harmony of Arcadia—free of ambition and inner conflict, they live in peace within their homes despite their occasional bloody tasks. Arcadians avengers are much more strongly aligned with law than with good, and as such, they are housed on Buxenus, the second layer of Arcadia.

TYPICAL TREASURE

Arcadian avengers have little use for treasure. Like other Arcadians, they find that the bounty of their native plane provides them with all they need. Each Arcadian avenger possesses two masterwork longswords. These functional weapons are the tools of the avengers' job and are seldom seen as anything more than utilitarian goods.

ARCADIAN AVENGERS WITH CLASS LEVELS

Arcadian avengers advance in the crusader class (*Tome of Battle* 8), relying on faith and martial power to work their will. If you don't use *Tome of Battle* in your campaign, advance Arcadian avengers as paladins. Both classes are considered associated for an Arcadian avenger.

Level Adjustment: +2.

FOR PLAYER CHARACTERS

A non-evil, lawful spellcaster can summon an Arcadian avenger using *summon monster IV* or a higher-level *summon monster* spell. Treat the Arcadian avenger as if it were on the 4th-level list on the Summon Monster table (PH 287). Non-evil, lawful clerics can use a *planar ally* spell to call an Arcadian avenger, who demands payment in the form of a task furthering the cause of law.

ARCADIAN AVENGERS IN EBERRON

Arcadian avengers are native to Daanvi, the Perfect Order. They commonly venture to Shavarath to lend their swords and hone their skills in battle. On Eberron itself, Arcadian avengers hunt those who work chaos, so they can be found in the Demon Wastes and similar places across the world. More than one Arcadian avenger participated in the Last War, and some of these remain in Khorvaire in self-imposed exile or as centers of celestial cults.

ARCADIAN AVENGERS IN FAERÛN

In the House of the Triad, legions of Arcadian avengers make their home, protecting the petitioners of Toril's heaven from the influences of other planes and entities. Although the avengers are bound in duty to the House of the Triad, a great number of them are loyal to Helm. All Arcadian avengers take their duty as watchers and protectors of the law extremely seriously, and Helm's dogma suits them well.

Illus. by R. Horsley

BANSHRAE

A willowy figure dressed in dark green finery approaches, a lustrous topknot decorated with gold ornaments draped over its shoulder. Except for its golden, insectile eyes, the creature's oval face is eerily featureless, yet it raises a carved wooden flute to its chin and begins to play a haunting tune.

BANSHRAE CR 8

Usually CE Medium fey
Init +7; **Senses** low-light vision; Listen +16, Spot +16
Languages understands Common, Elven, Sylvan; cannot speak; telepathy 100 ft.

AC 22, touch 22, flat-footed 22; Deflect Arrows, Dodge, Mobility, sylvan warrior
(+7 Dex, +5 deflection)
hp 97 (15 HD); **DR** 10/cold iron
Fort +8, **Ref** +16, **Will** +11

Speed 60 ft. (12 squares); Spring Attack
Melee unarmed strike +15/+10 (2d6+3)
Ranged mwk greater blowgun +15/+10 (1d3)
Space 5 ft.; **Reach** 5 ft.
Base Atk +7; **Grp** +10
Atk Options Stunning Fist 3/day (DC 19)
Special Actions blowgun flute, dart cone, locust dart
Spell-Like Abilities (CL 10th):
1/day—*bestow curse* (DC 19)

Abilities Str 16, Dex 24, Con 17, Int 14, Wis 15, Cha 20
SA blowgun flute, dart cone, locust dart, spell-like abilities
Feats Combat Expertise, Deflect Arrows^{B}, Dodge, Improved Unarmed Strike^{B}, Mobility, Spring Attack, Stunning Fist^{B}, Weapon Finesse, Weapon Focus (unarmed strike)
Skills Balance +17, Bluff +15, Climb +8, Diplomacy +7, Disguise +13 (+15 acting), Escape Artist +24, Hide +19, Intimidate +7, Jump +25, Knowledge (nature) +8, Listen +16, Move Silently +19, Perform (wind instruments) +23 (+25 with blowgun flute), Spot +16, Survival +2 (+4 in aboveground natural environments), Tumble +21, Use Rope +7 (+9 bindings)
Advancement by character class; **Favored Class** fighter

Sylvan Warrior (Su) A banshrae applies its Charisma bonus as a deflection bonus to its Armor Class. It doesn't lose its Dexterity bonus to AC when flat-footed.

Blowgun Flute (Su) At will, as an immediate action, a banshrae can call into being a masterwork flute that also functions as a masterwork greater blowgun (10-foot range increment). A banshrae can have only one such flute at a time, and the instrument disappears if the fey loses possession of it.

Each round, a banshrae can play its flute as a swift action to create one of the effects detailed below. Opponents within a 60-foot-radius spread who can hear the flute can be affected (Will DC 22 negates)—the effect ends if an enemy can no longer hear the music creating it. The save DC is Charisma-based. The tunes are sonic mind-affecting abilities.

Dread Dirge: This mournful tune creates deep unease. Affected creatures are shaken. This is a fear effect.

Gibbering Sing-Along: This catchy melody forces listeners to blather meaningless sounds. Affected creatures fail Move Silently checks, give away their positions if invisible or hidden, cannot talk, and cannot cast spells that have verbal components.

Traveler's Tune: This sprightly ditty forces affected creatures to move at least 20 feet on their turns.

Dart Cone (Ex) Once per day per point of Charisma bonus a banshrae possesses, as a full-round action, the creature can create a 15-foot cone of blowgun darts. Those caught in the cone take 4d6 points of damage (Reflex DC 24 half). The save DC is Dexterity-based.

Locust Dart (Su) Once per day, a banshrae can fire a special dart. An opponent struck by this dart is sickened for 1 round and takes 2d6 points of damage as locusts emerge from its body (Fortitude DC 20 negates). The locusts form a swarm (*MM* 239) that obeys the banshrae's commands for 2d6 rounds before dispersing. The save DC is Constitution-based.

Bestow Curse (Sp) Once per day, a banshrae can produce a *bestow curse* effect. Victims of this curse inspire anger in those around them, taking a –6 penalty on Bluff and Diplomacy checks as well as a –2 penalty to Armor Class.

Banshraes are spiteful, musically inclined fey that use their supernatural tunes to torment other creatures. Their taste for melodic mischief belies their incredible martial skill.

STRATEGIES AND TACTICS

When combat is joined, a banshrae summons its blowgun flute and begins playing. It then uses its speed and maneuverability to command the battlefield, dancing around opponents to gain advantageous positions from which to use its considerable combat skills. It takes out dangerous opponents first, so it can later toy with weaker foes. Using Combat Expertise to ensure safety without seriously compromising its fighting prowess, a banshrae never strikes from the same place twice. It uses its locust dart and the resultant swarm to help control the fight, focusing the swarm on troublesome spellcasters.

SAMPLE ENCOUNTER

Banshraes are individualistic, but they do live among evil fey and serve strong leaders.

Murderous Messenger (EL 8): A banshrae carries important missives and supplies between enclaves of evil fey on a regular route. It makes stops at villages along the way

BANSHRAE LORE

Characters who have ranks in Knowledge (nature) can learn more about banshraes. When a character makes a successful skill check, the following lore is revealed, including the information from lower DCs.

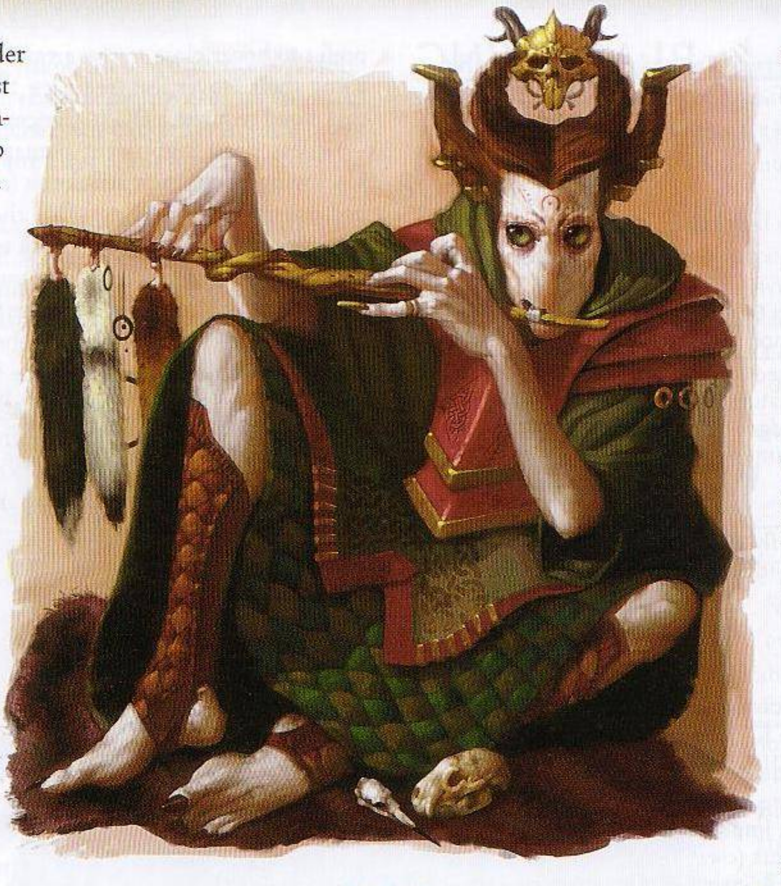
Knowledge (Nature)

DC	Result
18	This creature is a banshrae, a wicked fey that can play music to bewilder and harm mortals.
23	Banshraes are powerful combatants that can play their flutes while fighting. They can use those flutes to fire clouds of darts, and they are vulnerable to cold iron.
28	A banshrae can sometimes cause a target struck by a special dart to spontaneously spew forth a swarm of locusts. It can also afflict an unlucky soul with a curse that draws the ire of others.

to rob, harass, and murder innocent citizens. The last time through, the banshrae killed a hunter who was the local lord's friend. That lord now seeks courageous individuals to waylay the fey and punish it for this crime.

ECOLOGY

Originally less harmful fey who sang and reveled among their more benevolent kin, banshraes became what they are through the treachery of an elder of their kind. This banshrae, whose name and actual crime are forgotten, betrayed a capricious fey queen, who in turn cursed all banshraes, stealing their mouths. A mighty and terrible verdant prince (*MM4* 172) made a compact with the banshraes, interceding with dark spirits and allowing the banshraes to have back a measure of their musical ability. Since then, banshraes have bred true, forming a new fey race devoted to grief and fear.



Banshrae

Banshraes "eat" while they rest, absorbing sustenance from nearby plants and the earth. They breathe through holes in the sides of their heads, under the hair.

Environment: Banshraes prefer temperate forests, but they can live in any environment that can sustain fey. They enjoy tormenting humanoids, so they often live close to humanoid settlements.

Typical Physical Characteristics: Banshraes resemble particularly lithe elves, a little over 5 feet tall and about 100 pounds in weight. Their faces are smooth and featureless, except for their golden insectile eyes. Their frail appearance masks their physical power and martial skill.

Alignment: Banshraes are embittered souls, and they hate most creatures except other banshraes. Even powerful evil fey must watch their banshrae servants—treachery is in a banshrae's nature. Jealous and vindictive, banshraes destroy that which is beautiful and wholesome. They ruin or pollute that which they can never enjoy, such as food and water. Banshraes are usually chaotic evil.

SOCIETY

Banshraes dwell in communities among other blackhearted fey. They serve as minstrels, spies, and soldiers for malevolent fey leaders or other iniquitous and powerful creatures. Verdant princes and evil nymphs enjoy such service, and they repay a banshrae's loyalty with honor and treasure, rewarding treachery with swift death.

Even among wicked fey, banshraes are notorious for abusing those weaker than they, as their whims dictate. Banshraes respect only other banshraes and the strong. Nonfey can expect torment and murder at their hands.

TYPICAL TREASURE

Banshraes adore fine clothing and jewelry. Their love for music inspires them to collect masterwork instruments made from—or extravagantly decorated with—precious materials. They have standard treasure for their Challenge Rating.

BANSHRAES WITH CLASS LEVELS

Banshraes are soldiers that revel in battle and turmoil. They usually augment their considerable combat skills by advancing as fighters, though some advance as rogues. Both classes are considered associated for a banshrae. These fey never use divine magic—they despise the gods and have no conscious connection to nature.

Level Adjustment: +4.

BANSHRAES IN EBERRON

Banshraes were residents of Thelanis, the Faerie Court, but an unnamed treachery by the banshraes of old brought the mouthless curse and banishment upon the entire race. Exiled banshraes then spread throughout Khorvaire and beyond, existing as deceitful vagabonds. A few still dwell in the Twilight Demesne in the Eldeen Reaches, but they are unwelcome there. Some fled north to the Demon Wastes to offer their services as spies to the Lords of Dust. More joined with the dark fey that rule the Watching Wood in Droaam, and some of these have pledged their flutes to the service of the Daughters of Sora Kell. It is said that banshraes also inhabit the Whisper Woods of Aundair.

Illus. by I. Medrano

BLACKWING

This large skeletal bird's ragged, ebony wings end in masses of sharp, broken-off bones. Its red eyes seem full of malice and malign intelligence. Talons and a curved beak make up its natural armaments.

BLACKWING **CR 8**
Always NE Large undead
Init +7; **Senses** darkvision 60 ft.; Listen +17, Spot +21
Languages Auran, Common

AC 20, touch 12, flat-footed 17
(–1 size, +3 Dex, +8 natural)
hp 78 (12 HD); **DR** 5/bludgeoning
Immune cold, undead immunities
Resist evasion
Fort +4, **Ref** +9, **Will** +10

Speed 30 ft. (6 squares), fly 80 ft. (average); Hover
Melee 2 claws +13 each (1d6+8) and bite +8 (1d8+4)
Space 10 ft.; **Reach** 5 ft.
Base Atk +6; **Grp** +18
Atk Options Blind-Fight
Special Actions frightful dive, wail of despair

Abilities Str 26, Dex 17, Con —, Int 10, Wis 14, Cha 14
SA frightful dive, wail of despair
SQ undead traits
Feats Blind-Fight, Hover, Improved Initiative, Lightning Reflexes, Weapon Focus (claw)
Skills Hide +14, Listen +17, Search +7, Sense Motive +10, Spot +21
Advancement 13–24 HD (Large); 25–28 HD (Huge)

Frightful Dive (Su) When a flying blackwing charges a target below it, that foe must succeed on a DC 18 Will save or be shaken for 1 round (or frightened if already shaken). In addition, a blackwing can make two claw attacks against a target that fails its save. The save DC is Charisma-based. This is a mind-affecting fear effect.

Wail of Despair (Su) When two or more blackwings within 30 feet of one another scream, their cries combine to create a wail of despair, which affects all creatures within 100 feet of any wailing blackwing. Any creature in the area must succeed on a DC 18 Will save or cower for 1d4 rounds and be shaken for 4 rounds thereafter. For every additional two blackwings participating in a wail of despair, the DC increases by 2. The effect of multiple wails does not stack. The save DC is Charisma-based. This is a mind-affecting fear ability.

Skills A blackwing has a +4 racial bonus on Spot checks.

Blackwings are the keen-eyed undead guardians of a fallen civilization.

STRATEGIES AND TACTICS

Blackwings spend much of their time patrolling the hills and mountains surrounding their lairs. When they spot prey, they immediately plummet down to attack, using their frightful dive to enter combat.

They use differing tactics based on the nature of their foes. Blackwings facing flying opponents fight a hit-and-run battle, using their superior speed to divide their enemies before picking off stragglers. Against land-bound opponents, they prefer to hover close to the ground, creating debris clouds using their Hover feat (see page 204). Spellcasting within this cloud requires a DC 16 Concentration check.

Unless dealt significant damage by other opponents, blackwings focus their attacks on foes shaken or frightened because of frightful dives. Once they have slain their foes, blackwings carry the bodies back to their lair to search for shiny trinkets. Blackwings fight until destroyed.

Members of a flock of blackwings fight in concert, keeping as many foes as possible within debris clouds. They use wail of despair at the beginning of the battle, then gang up on one enemy at a time. Only when all enemies appear free of fear does a flock of blackwings bother wailing again.

If their lair is invaded, blackwings bull rush lightly armored or Small foes out of the cave and down the mountainside. Heavily armored enemies are then cornered and ripped apart. Blackwings mercilessly hunt down fleeing invaders.

SAMPLE ENCOUNTERS

Blackwings can be encountered as individuals or in flocks of up to six members. Individuals or flocks patrol the territory around the ancient sites they were created to guard, maintaining tireless vigils. They know the terrain around their lairs intimately.

An undead spellcaster of great power—typically a lich or a vampire—might bend a blackwing to its will, commanding that blackwing to act as a mount or a spy. Intelligent and malevolent, a blackwing might instead willingly ally itself with another undead creature. Since undead are immune to wail of despair, they can even ride blackwings into battle.

A Deadly Duo (EL 10): A particularly bloodthirsty mohrg (*MM* 189) and a blackwing dwell in an isolated cavern hidden deep within a mountain range. Together, they have been terrorizing a nearby community of gnome miners. They attack under cover of darkness. Flying toward the gnome settlement, they spot the PCs' campfire and

BLACKWING LORE

Characters who have ranks in Knowledge (religion) can learn more about blackwings. When a character makes a successful skill check, the following lore is revealed, including the information from lower DCs.

Knowledge (Religion)

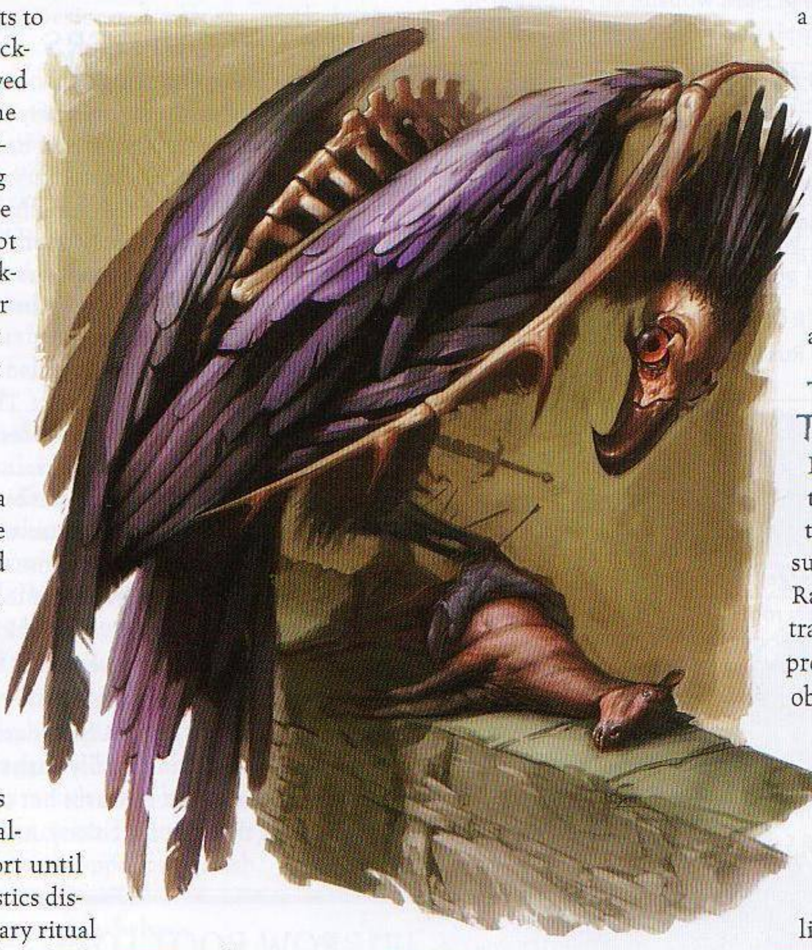
DC	Result
18	This is a blackwing, a powerful, undead bird. It is a swift flyer and can create great dust clouds with its wings.
23	Blackwings are tough, but this resilience is overcome by bludgeoning weapons. They are immune to cold.
28	Blackwings terrify their prey by plummeting down to attack from above. Groups of blackwings can create a terrible wailing to incapacitate their foes.

investigate, approaching from different directions. As soon as the mohrg moves in, the blackwing uses its frightful dive against an opponent near the campfire. In subsequent rounds, it hovers over the fire, plunging the battlefield into darkness.

Cold Vengeance (EL 10): Three blackwings patrol the area around a lich's lair. When they spot interlopers, two dive down to attack while the third observes the battle. If its companions are destroyed, the survivor retreats to warn the lich. Quick-witted and sharp-eyed PCs can locate the lich's lair by following the retreating blackwing. If the characters do not pursue, the blackwing and its master appear later that same night, intent on revenge.

ECOLOGY

Centuries ago, a powerful orc tribe claimed a rugged mountain range, constantly warring against the giant eagles and elves living in the surrounding forests. The orcs caught and brutalized eagles for sport until their depraved mystics discovered the necessary ritual to create powerful undead servitors—the first blackwings.



Blackwing

Environment: Blackwings guard tombs hidden high up on treacherous mountains. Such locales have only one entrance—usually a tunnel leading from a narrow ledge downward into the mountain's depths. Blackwings never enter the tomb itself, instead lairing on the ledge and in the entrance tunnel. The dismembered bodies of inquisitive explorers often fill a blackwing's lair.

Typical Physical Characteristics: The necromantic ritual used to create blackwings requires the intact body of a giant eagle. The process stains the creature's feathers and plumage a deep black and imbues the creature with unnatural vitality. Feathers hang limply from lumps of dry, leathery skin, and bones are exposed in places. A typical blackwing stands 10 feet tall and has a wingspan of about 20 feet. Its beak and claws are curved and extremely sharp.

Alignment: A blackwing is corrupt to its core, tainted by negative energy. It has no concern for law, but its actions are not unpredictable. Blackwings are always neutral evil.

SOCIETY

A blackwing that is not destroyed during the despoilment of its original lair has no true purpose, and it embarks on an odyssey of destruction. If it survives this violent rampage, the displaced blackwing settles in a new location from which it terrorizes the surrounding countryside. Multiple displaced blackwings might congregate, forming a mockery of a natural bird flock. Members of a flock stick together even if they are forced to abandon a lair.

TYPICAL TREASURE

Blackwings do not covet treasure for its value, but they have standard treasure for their Challenge Rating because they are attracted to shiny items. They prominently display such objects to catch sunlight filtering in from outside. In a twisted parody of their former lives, they preen in front of particularly reflective items. Other valuables lie forgotten among their victims' remains.

FOR PLAYER CHARACTERS

Blackwings offer a couple of prospects for characters.

Creation: Blackwings are created from the corpses of giant eagles. The corpse must be buried within the area of an *unhallow* spell for at least six months. Then, a spellcaster of 18th level or higher must cast *create undead* on the remains.

Mounts: A blackwing must willingly submit to training as a mount. Training the creature requires four weeks of work and a DC 25 Handle Animal check. Riding a blackwing requires an exotic saddle. A blackwing can fight when carrying a rider, but the rider must succeed on a Ride check to attack while the blackwing does so.

Carrying Capacity: A light load for a blackwing is up to 612 pounds; a medium load, 613–1,226 pounds; and a heavy load, 1,227–1,840 pounds.

Illus. by I. Medrano

BURROW ROOT

A massive ripple churns through the topsoil with great speed and fluidity. Suddenly, a strange, serpentine root—twice the length of a grown human—bursts through the surface. Its massive, thorny jaws snap at you with a ravenous hunger.

BURROW ROOT **CR 8**

Always N Large plant
Init +6; **Senses** blind, blindsight 30 ft., tremorsense 60 ft.; Listen +1
Languages —

AC 22, touch 11, flat-footed 20
(–1 size, +2 Dex, +11 natural)
hp 114 (12 HD)
Immune plant immunities
Fort +13, **Ref** +6, **Will** +5

Speed 30 ft. (6 squares), burrow 20 ft.; speed burrow
Melee bite +16 (2d6+12/19–20 plus wounding) or
Melee tail spike +16 (1d6+4 plus 1 Con plus wounding)
Space 10 ft.; **Reach** 5 ft.
Base Atk +9; **Grp** +21
Atk Options Improved Bull Rush, Power Attack
Special Actions split

Abilities Str 26, Dex 15, Con 20, Int 2, Wis 12, Cha 7
SA split, wounding
SQ plant traits
Feats Improved Bull Rush, Improved Critical (bite), Improved Initiative, Improved Natural Attack (bite), Power Attack
Skills Hide +13, Listen +1
Advancement 13–16 HD (Large); 17–25 HD (Huge)

Speed Burrow (Ex) A burrow root can move quickly through loose soil. Three times per day, as an immediate action, a burrow root can move 20 feet through the ground. This movement does not provoke attacks of opportunity.

Wounding (Ex) Any living creature damaged by a burrow root continues to bleed, losing 1 hit point per round thereafter. Multiple wounds do not result in cumulative blood loss. The bleeding can be stopped by a DC 21 Heal check or the application of healing magic.

Split (Ex) When a burrow root is reduced to half of its full normal hit points or fewer, it splits in half. The new root's game statistics are identical to those of its parent. Divide the parent creature's remaining hit points evenly between the two organisms. The older burrow root cannot split again for 24 hours, and the younger burrow root cannot split for 24 hours after it emerges.

Burrow roots are animate plants that feed on blood. They attack to spill blood on the ground, then burrow underground and consume their food in safety.

STRATEGIES AND TACTICS

A burrow root attacks in three stages. Upon sensing prey, the creature burrows rapidly toward that quarry, springing from the earth and delivering a powerful bite. If multiple opponents are nearby, the burrow root attacks each one with the goal of spilling as much blood on the ground as possible. It uses its speed burrow ability to quickly move between opponents or to escape from a particularly nasty foe or effect. A burrow root can instinctively determine if a creature has blood—it ignores a bloodlesss creature unless that creature seriously harms it.

A burrow root needs to be split to reproduce, so it fights until it has lost half of its hit points. If an individual burrow root is reduced to 9 hit points or fewer, it retreats beneath the surface, content to nourish itself with the blood seeping down from above.

SAMPLE ENCOUNTERS

Burrow roots often hunt in groups, moving into a territory and infesting it. In civilized areas, they are hunted and either killed outright or driven back into the remote wilderness.

Beholders, harpies, and other intelligent flying creatures use burrow roots to drive earthbound foes from behind cover. Less intelligent flying predators roost above burrow root infestations, swooping down as the burrow roots attack or scavenging remains after a battle.

Trail of Blood (EL 9): A trail of tilled soil—the path of a burrow root—leads deep into a forest. The burrow root has been following a briarvex (*MM4* 26), despite the fact that it must go deep into hard, forested terrain, since it finds that blood is easier to come by when the briarvex is near. The burrow root's burrowing and the briarvex's woodland stride allow them full mobility even in dense vegetation.

In battle, the briarvex uses *entangle* to hold enemies still, then allows the burrow root to attack those opponents, making it more likely for those foes to bleed out from the burrow root's wounding attacks.

Minion Colony (EL 14): A harpy archer (*MM* 151) has strategically seeded a small gully with six burrow roots to target passing caravans. She uses her captivating song to lure opponents through the colony. As soon as the burrow

BURROW ROOT LORE

Characters who have ranks in Knowledge (nature) can learn more about burrow roots. When a character makes a successful skill check, the following lore is revealed, including the information from lower DCs.

Knowledge (Nature)

DC	Result
18	This is a burrow root, a strange, burrowing plant. Wounds caused by a burrow root continue to bleed, spilling blood into the soil and providing the creature with food.
23	A burrow root can quickly burrow underground to escape its enemies. Its tail is a spiked root that can drain blood and small amounts of vitality from creatures it pierces.
28	When severely wounded, a burrow root becomes two independent creatures.

roots close in on their targets, she swoops in from above, peppering her opponents with arrows.

ECOLOGY

Burrow roots are predators that live just beneath the topsoil. The blood of living creatures sustains them, so unless they are provided with a steady food source by a third party, they root in areas that have high traffic. Once they find an appropriate spot, they colonize it and begin reproducing. Desiccated corpses mark burrow root territory.

Burrow roots reproduce asexually, splitting apart into separate creatures once they have grown too large or have taken significant damage. Since they are easy to cultivate, a few wily and powerful creatures breed burrow roots as guardians.

Environment: A burrow root's environment is limited to regions where food is plentiful. They colonize warm or temperate regions, and they prefer areas with soft, treeless terrain, such as marshes, plains, and hills. They live near roads, agricultural fields, bodies of water, and other prey-attracting features.

A burrow root's usual mode of travel leaves behind large trails of upturned soil. From a distance, these trails look like twisted patches of veins bulging from the earth's surface. The tilled earth is soft, making for treacherous travel (difficult terrain) along a burrow root's trail.

Typical Physical Characteristics: A burrow root is between 12 and 14 feet long. The bulk of its gray-brown body is about the width of a human head, and its posterior tapers to a sharp spike. Dozens of thorny branches split the anterior, creating the appearance of an exaggerated maw about the size of a barrel. It uses its mouth to wound its prey, but it can absorb nutrients by imbedding its spiked taproot into an opponent's flesh, draining that creature's blood.

Alignment: Because they behave solely based on survival instincts, burrow roots are always neutral.

TYPICAL TREASURE

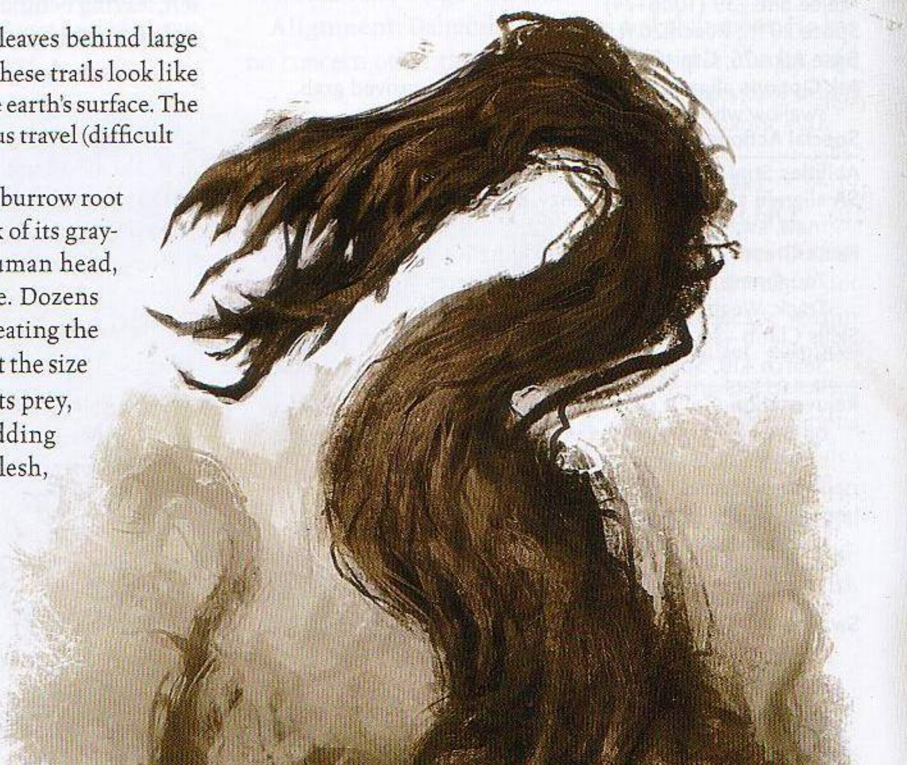
Burrow roots have no concept of material wealth. Still, treasure lies among the remains of the victims that fertilize burrow root territories. The enzyme-rich soil quickly decomposes soft, organic materials such as paper, cloth, and leather, so only harder items remain. Searching the surrounding soil reveals coins, gems, and other solid objects equivalent to standard treasure for a creature of the burrow root's Challenge Rating.

BURROW ROOTS IN EBERRON

In Khorvaire, the earliest references to burrow roots are found in pre-Galifar guild documents of House Deneith. Some have even suggested that Deneith magically bred these creatures to provide a quick and mobile fortification system for its troops in occupied territories. Of course, House Deneith formally denounces such conjecture. Driven far from most civilized lands, burrow roots can be found in the Shadow Marches, the Demon Wastes, the Mournland, and other such desolate places.

BURROW ROOTS IN FAERÛN

Burrow roots are sacred to the church of Urdlen. It is widely speculated that the spriggans (*Fiend Folio* 162) of his highest order first cultivated the plant. Urdlen's most devout followers seed burrow roots near their temples and delight in offering the plants living sacrifices as a highlight of their Feeding ceremonies. Burrow roots have claimed more than a few worshipers during the Night of Blood.



Burrow root

Illus. by Daarken

DALMOSH

Before you stands an enormous humanlike figure, at least 50 feet tall, whose brown, leathery skin is covered in scars. Each scar is straight and has a row of tiny spikes on either side, as if it's a sealed mouth through which sharp teeth have poked. The creature has no hair on his massive body. His face—little more than a pair of blue eyes set just above a massive maw—is soft, as if no bones support the flesh. More spiny scars cross the palms of the gigantic creature's hands.

DALMOSH **CR 17**
CE Gargantuan outsider (chaotic, evil, extraplanar)
Init +1; **Senses** darkvision 120 ft., low-light vision, scent; Listen +30, Spot +30
Languages Abyssal

AC 13, touch 3, flat-footed 13
(–4 size, –3 Dex, +10 natural)
hp 461 (26 HD); rejuvenation
Immune acid, disease, poison, suffocation
Resist cold 10, electricity 10, fire 10
Fort +29, **Ref** +14, **Will** +18

Speed 50 ft. (10 squares)
Melee bite +39 (10d6+24)
Space 20 ft.; **Reach** 20 ft.
Base Atk +26; **Grp** +54
Atk Options aligned strike (chaotic, evil), improved grab, swallow whole
Special Actions feeding frenzy, spawn maw

Abilities Str 42, Dex 5, Con 34, Int 4, Wis 13, Cha 12
SA aligned strike, feeding frenzy, improved grab, spawn maw, swallow whole
Feats Great Fortitude, Improved Initiative, Improved Toughness, Iron Will, Lightning Reflexes, Toughness (2), Track, Weapon Focus (bite)
Skills Climb +36, Intimidate +20, Jump +40, Listen +30, Search +10, Spot +30, Survival +20 (+22 following tracks)

Rejuvenation (Su) If slain, Dalmosh restores himself to life on the Flesh Mountains in the Abyss two days later. He returns to the same peaks in two days if called to the Material Plane.

Improved Grab (Ex) To use this ability, Dalmosh must hit an opponent of up to Large size with a bite. He can then attempt to start a grapple as a free action without provoking attacks of opportunity.

Swallow Whole (Ex) Dalmosh can swallow a grabbed opponent of up to Large size by making a successful grapple check.

A swallowed creature takes 8d8 points of bludgeoning damage and 10 points of acid damage per round from Dalmosh's gizzard. The creature can cut its way out by using a light slashing or piercing weapon to deal 75 points of damage to the gizzard (AC 15). Once the creature exits, muscular action closes the hole; another swallowed opponent must cut its own way out.

A creature in Dalmosh's gizzard can see a portal to the Gullet (see Ecology) and is aware of where the portal leads. Exiting the gizzard to move into the Gullet requires making a successful DC 26 Escape Artist check or dealing half the damage required to cut out of Dalmosh's gizzard. The DC is Strength-based.

Dalmosh's gizzard can hold 2 Large, 8 Medium, 32 Small, 128 Tiny, or 512 Diminutive or smaller opponents. Inanimate objects pass through the gizzard into the Gullet immediately, but dead creatures stay until ground into bits.

Feeding Frenzy (Ex) Once per minute, as a full-round action, Dalmosh can move up to his speed, simultaneously attacking all creatures that come within his reach with a single bite attack.

Spawn Maw (Ex) When dealt 20 or more points of damage in a single attack, Dalmosh can take an immediate action to spawn a new mouth where the attack damaged him, granting him an additional bite attack for the duration of the encounter. If an opponent adjacent to Dalmosh made the attack that caused a new mouth to appear, Dalmosh can make a bite attack against that foe as a free action.

Dalmosh of the Infinite Maws, a gluttonous being of destruction, is an immortal denizen of the Abyss. He lumbers through the Flesh Mountains he calls home, chewing through anything that obstructs his path, sculpting the peaks into a strange arrangement of swirling arcs. Any creatures that visit those forsaken summits are potentially Dalmosh's prey—he grabs and eats any creature that comes within reach, and he tracks those whose trails he finds.

When called to the Material Plane, Dalmosh gorges himself, leaving behind nothing but bare dirt. Creatures, plants, and even structures disappear into his bottomless Gullet. For some reason, though, Dalmosh doesn't eat the unshaped rock and earth of the Material Plane.

STRATEGIES AND TACTICS

Dalmosh simply bites anything that comes close. If he desires a morsel that is beyond his reach, he chases it until he catches it or spots something tastier.

SAMPLE ENCOUNTER

Though Dalmosh is dull, brutal, and indiscriminately destructive, he has managed to accumulate admirers. Trolls

DALMOSH LORE

Characters who have ranks in Knowledge (the planes) can learn more about Dalmosh. When a character makes a successful skill check, the following lore is revealed, including the information from lower DCs.

Knowledge (the Planes)

DC	Result
27	This is Dalmosh of the Infinite Maws, an outsider and Abyssal avatar of hunger that can eat any material. When he suffers an injury, he grows a new mouth, which bites when Dalmosh attacks.
32	Dalmosh is immune to acid, disease, poison, and suffocation. He is resistant to cold, electricity, and fire.
37	Dalmosh can swallow creatures whole, and his gizzard leads to a finite planar space known as Dalmosh's Gullet.
42	If killed, Dalmosh merely rejuvenates, reappearing on the Flesh Mountains in the Abyss within two days. He is easily called to the Material Plane. This result reveals the required ritual.

and ogres view Dalmosh as the ultimate expression of their vicious, avaricious natures. Some orcs do the same, but they see Dalmosh as a potential weapon, not as an object of worship.

Those who summon Dalmosh do so to destroy their enemies. No sane creature believes that Dalmosh is capable of more than this. In fact, Dalmosh's summoners know they risk their lives, for he of the Infinite Maws readily eats those who remain nearby after a summoning ritual.

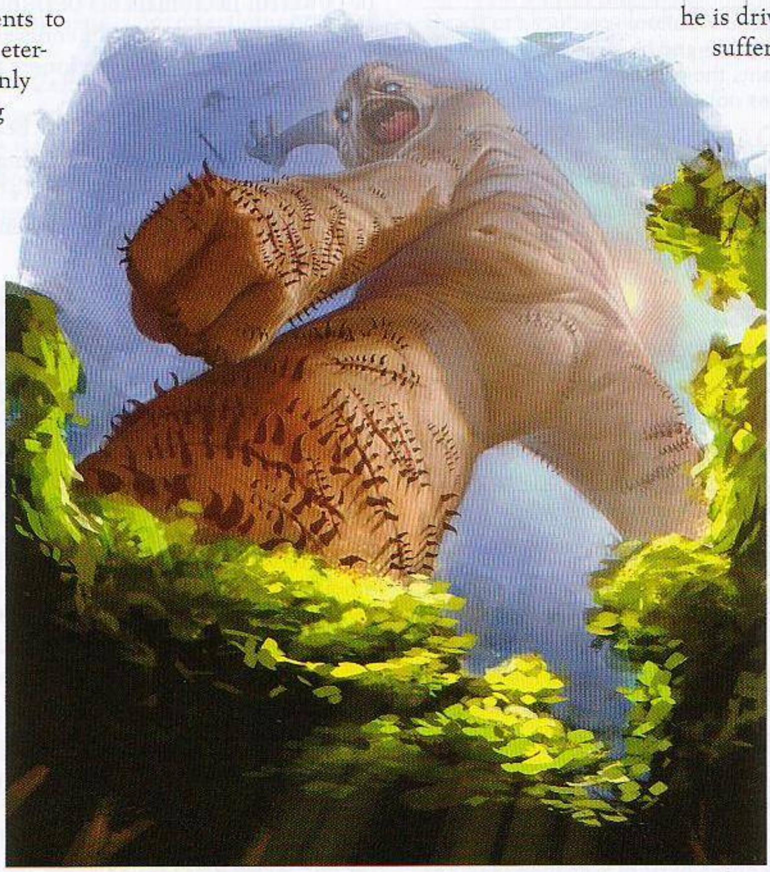
Grotesque Escape (EL 17): Dalmosh appears on the Material Plane in response to the summoning spell of a demonologist who is trying to escape the PCs. The spellcaster allows himself to be eaten, slipping into the Gullet. Dalmosh then rampages through the area, requiring the characters to quell his violence. They then have to find a way to follow their enemy.

ECOLOGY

Dalmosh has no ecological niche. He simply devours everything in his path, following the movement and noise that attract him to a potential meal.

The Flesh Mountains, Dalmosh's Abyssal home, stretch across several layers of the Abyss. His dwelling is a vast cave eaten out of those same mountains, where he lounges and takes brief moments to digest. The mountains eternally grow larger, and only Dalmosh's endless eating keeps them in check.

Some say that Dalmosh is the living will of the Flesh Mountains, a strange entity that has existed as long as the Abyss. It is clear that Dalmosh can neither be permanently killed, nor can he remain far from his bizarre home for long. Two days after his death or his departure from the Flesh Mountains, he appears there once again.



Dalmosh of the Infinite Maws

Illus. by I. Medrano

Dalmosh eats endlessly, but he is never full. His gizzard contains a gate that is the only known entrance to a demiplane known as Dalmosh's Gullet. The ground within the Gullet is like the interior of a great beast's guts. When a creature or item passes into the Gullet, it appears 10 feet above the ground and falls. Howling gales (severe winds, *DMG* 95) twist through the Gullet, picking up debris and creatures. Those winds sometimes cross planar boundaries, depositing what they carry onto the Flesh Mountains or elsewhere.

Creatures that Dalmosh swallows sometimes knowingly choose to enter the Gullet rather than perish in his gizzard. Those unfortunate creatures that lack the means to travel the planes become trapped. They survive by eating the remains that fall from the sky, gathering magic items, building materials, and other tools that survive the trip into the Gullet. Here and there, crude settlements have arisen, and Garnamastra is the largest of these. A rakshasa known as the Eyeless Tyrant rules this place, backed by a small cabal of assassins and spellcasters.

Environment: Dalmosh can survive in any earthly environment, but he is most comfortable in temperate climes. His home is the Flesh Mountains of the Abyss.

Physical Characteristics: Dalmosh is an enormous humanoid-shaped creature covered in leathery flesh and scars. His head is all mouth except for his blue eyes. He is 50 feet tall and weighs ten tons.

Alignment: Dalmosh is ruthless and gluttonous. He has no concern other than feeding his insatiable hunger, and he is driven to destroy and inflict suffering. He is chaotic evil.

TYPICAL TREASURE

Dalmosh has no treasure, but ruins dot the landscape within the Gullet. Supposedly, the lost treasures of ancient civilizations that Dalmosh devoured remain hidden within those ruins. If this is true, Dalmosh's actual wealth is incalculable.

CALLING DALMOSH

Calling Dalmosh requires a simple ceremony that involves fine food and drink worth 10,000 gp. The summoner must mix the food in a massive vat, then perform a ritual chant that lasts an hour. At the end of this time, Dalmosh appears, devours the food, and then seeks other sustenance.

DEADBORN VULTURE

This gigantic bird has black feathers, but like a vulture, its plumage doesn't cover the ebony skin of its head. Its wings shine with an oily substance. A pair of glowing red eyes peers out from above a jagged beak.

DEADBORN VULTURE **CR 8**

Always NE Large magical beast
Init +3; **Senses** darkvision 60 ft., low-light vision; Listen +11, Spot +15
Languages understands Common; cannot speak

AC 18, touch 12, flat-footed 15
(–1 size, +3 Dex, +6 natural)
hp 67 (9 HD); deadborn
Fort +8, **Ref** +11, **Will** +4

Speed 10 ft. (2 squares), fly 70 ft. (poor); Flyby Attack
Melee 2 claws +14 each (1d6+6 plus disease) and bite +12 (1d8+3)
Space 10 ft.; **Reach** 5 ft.
Base Atk +9; **Grp** +19
Special Actions foul breath

Abilities Str 22, Dex 17, Con 14, Int 10, Wis 12, Cha 10
SA disease, foul breath
Feats Alertness, Flyby Attack, Lightning Reflexes, Multiattack
Skills Intimidate +8, Listen +11, Spot +15
Advancement 10–16 HD (Large); 17–27 HD (Huge)

Deadborn (Su) When a deadborn vulture is reduced to 0 hit points, it immediately dies and becomes a deadborn vulture zombie that retains the vulture's disease ability. This transformation does not cause a flying deadborn vulture to fall.
Disease (Ex) Claw, Fort DC 16 negates, incubation period 1 day, damage 1d4 Str. The save DC is Constitution-based.
Foul Breath (Ex) 30-foot cone, 1/day, nauseated 1d6 rounds, Fort DC 16 negates. The save DC is Constitution-based.
Skills Deadborn vultures have a +4 racial bonus on Spot checks.

DEADBORN VULTURE ZOMBIE **CR —**

Always NE Large undead
Init +2, single actions only; **Senses** darkvision 60 ft.; Listen +0, Spot +0
Languages —

AC 20, touch 11, flat-footed 18
(–1 size, +2 Dex, +9 natural)
hp 120 (18 HD); **DR** 5/slashing
Immune undead immunities
Fort +6, **Ref** +8, **Will** +11

Speed 10 ft. (2 squares), fly 70 ft. (clumsy)
Melee claw +15 (1d6+7 plus disease) or
Melee bite +15 (1d8+7) or
Melee slam +15 (1d8+7)
Space 10 ft.; **Reach** 5 ft.
Base Atk +9; **Grp** +20

Abilities Str 24, Dex 15, Con —, Int —, Wis 10, Cha 1
SA disease
SQ undead traits
Skills Listen +0, Spot +0
Feats Toughness
Advancement 19–32 HD (Large); 33–54 HD (Huge)

Single Actions Only (Ex) A deadborn vulture zombie can perform only a single move action or standard action each round. It can still charge.
Disease (Ex) Claw, Fort DC 19 negates, incubation period 1 day, damage 1d4 Str. The save DC is Constitution-based.

Necromancers create deadborn vultures from the eggs of giant eagles and giant owls. Once grown, the resulting black birds make excellent mounts that become undead creatures when they die.

STRATEGIES AND TACTICS

A deadborn vulture attacks from above by making a diving charge. It prefers to take out flying opponents first, using its claws in a Flyby Attack. It does the same to earthbound foes, maintaining the advantage of airborne assaults. When it fears for its life, a deadborn vulture uses its foul breath, catching as many enemies in the cone as possible.

After death, a deadborn vulture becomes a zombie. It continues to attack, but in its mindless state, it might land and attack from the ground.

SAMPLE ENCOUNTERS

Deadborn vultures are most often encountered in the service of powerful necromancers or influential blackguards. In such servitude, they might congregate in large numbers. Left on their own, they are loners that occasionally form pair bonds.

When a live deadborn vulture becomes a zombie during an encounter, the zombie's Challenge Rating is not considered as part of the Encounter Level. However, a deadborn vulture zombie has a CR of 6 when encountered solely in that form.

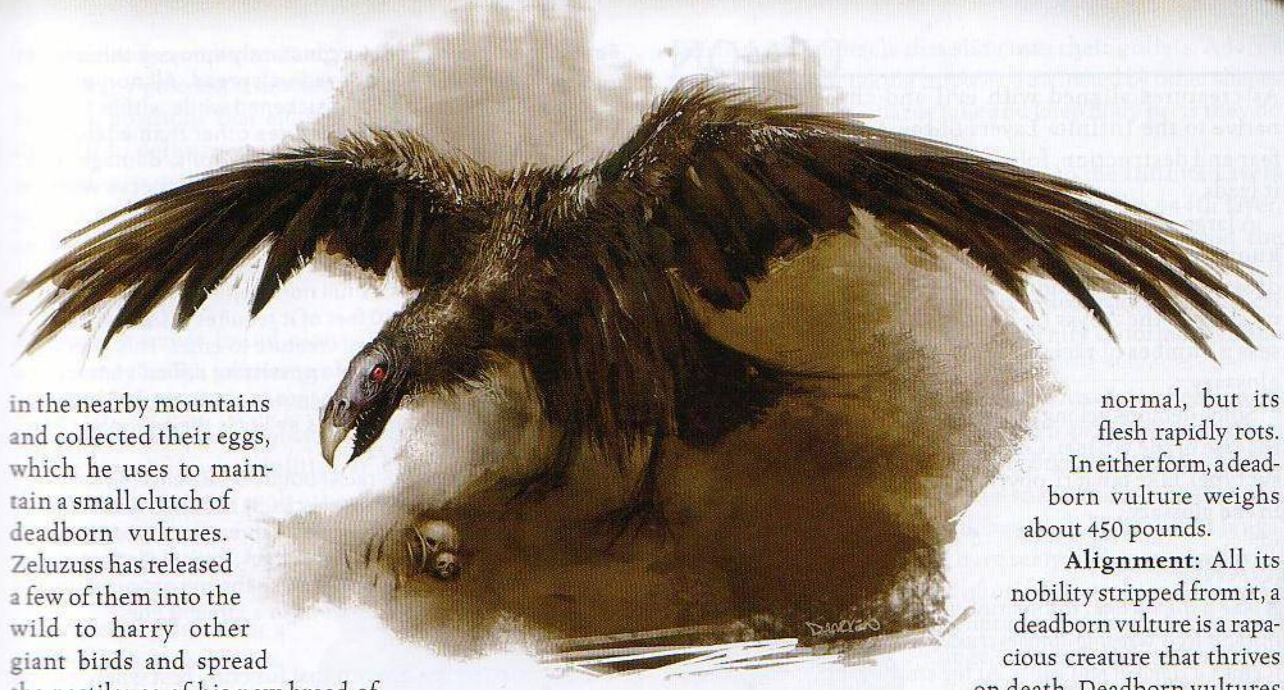
Dark Wings (EL 8–10): From a crooked tower in the center of an ancient forest, a wizard named Zeluzuss (NE male human necromancer 10) plots his revenge against the kingdom whose people drove him from his home and killed his wife and servants. He has slain a few giant eagles

DEADBORN VULTURE LORE

Characters who have ranks in Knowledge (arcana) can learn more about deadborn vultures. When a character makes a successful skill check, the following lore is revealed, including the information from lower DCs.

Knowledge (Arcana)

DC	Result
18	This creature is a deadborn vulture, a magical beast that has two lives. It reanimates as a zombie after it dies.
23	A deadborn vulture carries disease and can breathe out a foul, nauseating cloud.
28	Those who know the proper formulas can make deadborn vultures from the eggs of giant eagles or giant owls. This result reveals those formulas.



Deadborn vulture

Illus. by Daarken

in the nearby mountains and collected their eggs, which he uses to maintain a small clutch of deadborn vultures. Zeluzuss has released a few of them into the wild to harry other giant birds and spread the pestilence of his new breed of raptor. Even the wild vultures return to Zeluzuss's tower bearing the corpses of those they've slain. One or two of the vile birds might be encountered in the wilderness or in settlements near Zeluzuss's tower.

Darker Rider (EL 12): Zeluzuss sometimes wings about the area on the back of one of his deadborn vultures, gathering fresh corpses for his work and terrorizing any who carry the banner of his hated homeland. A second deadborn vulture accompanies him on these forays.

ECOLOGY

Deadborn vultures are loathsome, murderous creatures, corrupted by the process that makes them. Unlike the mundane vultures they resemble, deadborn vultures prefer live and intelligent prey. They especially enjoy killing and feasting upon other giant birds, a task they are well suited to.

Deadborn vultures are sterile. One reason they seek out other giant birds is that a giant eagle or giant owl egg brooded over by a deadborn vulture is corrupted, and the chick is born a deadborn vulture.

After being reanimated as zombies, deadborn vultures do not eat, sleep, or reproduce. Unlike most other zombies, they remain loyal to creatures they were friendly with in life.

Environment: As created creatures, deadborn vultures can be found anywhere, but they are usually found near the temperate habitats of other giant raptors—forests or mountains.

Typical Physical Characteristics: A deadborn vulture stands just over 9 feet tall, has a 20-foot wingspan, and resembles a giant vulture. Its oily black feathers, disheveled appearance, and glowing red eyes identify it as something far more sinister. After death, a deadborn vulture zombie looks normal, but its flesh rapidly rots. In either form, a deadborn vulture weighs about 450 pounds.

Alignment: All its nobility stripped from it, a deadborn vulture is a rapacious creature that thrives on death. Deadborn vultures are always neutral evil.

TYPICAL TREASURE

Deadborn vultures don't value treasure and have none. Their masters are often wealthier for having such mighty raptors in their service.

FOR PLAYER CHARACTERS

Deadborn vultures can't be trained unless they are willing, requiring one to be reared to the saddle or influenced to a friendly attitude with a successful Diplomacy check. Training a deadborn vulture requires four weeks of work and a DC 25 Handle Animal check. Riding a deadborn vulture requires an exotic saddle. A deadborn vulture can fight when carrying a rider, but the rider must succeed on a Ride check to attack while the vulture does so.

A giant eagle egg or giant owl egg is worth 2,500 gp, and the formulas and components necessary to make the egg hatch a deadborn vulture cost 5,000 gp. Few trainers are willing to rear or train a deadborn vulture, but those that are charge 2,000 gp to do so.

Carrying Capacity: A light load for a deadborn vulture is up to 520 pounds; a medium load, 521–1,040 pounds; and a heavy load, 1,041–1,560 pounds. A light load for a deadborn vulture zombie is up to 700 pounds; a medium load, 701–1,400 pounds; and a heavy load, 1,401–2,100 pounds.

DEADBORN VULTURES IN FAERÛN

The drow of Cormanthor, who desire the corruption of all the elves hold dear, created deadborn vultures. House Jaelre's necromancers devised these raptors, and the formulas have spread to other drow houses. Now, a few deadborn vultures live in the wilds of the ancient forest.

DEMON

As creatures aligned with evil and chaos, demons are native to the Infinite Layers of the Abyss. They revel in fear and destruction, following their depravity wherever it leads.

A large number of demons belong to a race (and subtype) known as tanar'ri. The tanar'ri form the largest and most diverse group of demons, and they are the unchallenged masters of the Abyss (at least in their eyes). Tanar'ri possess a number of racial traits that are summarized in the glossary.

Some demons belong to other races, some of which predate the rise of the tanar'ri. One of these is the obyrith race (and subtype). Like tanar'ri, obyriths share racial traits as defined in the glossary.

ADARU

A blue millipedelike creature rushes headlong on countless orange insectile legs. Weeping dimples crusted with filth cover its body, and it emits a cloud of foul vapor. As the creature moves, its grotesque parody of a child's face gnashes its dripping brown fangs.

ADARU **CR 10**

Always CE Medium outsider (chaotic, evil, extraplanar, tanar'ri)
Init +6; **Senses** darkvision 60 ft.; Listen +17, Spot +17
Aura fetid cloud (30 ft.)
Languages Abyssal, Celestial, Common, Draconic, Infernal, Terran; telepathy 100 ft.

AC 24, touch 12, flat-footed 22; Dodge, Mobility (+2 Dex, +12 natural)
hp 110 (13 HD); **DR** 10/good
Immune electricity, poison
Resist acid 10, cold 10, fire 10; **SR** 18
Fort +12, **Ref** +10, **Will** +9

Speed 50 ft. (10 squares), burrow 30 ft., climb 50 ft., swim 30 ft.; Spring Attack
Melee bite +16 (1d8+4 plus poison)
Space 5 ft.; **Reach** 5 ft.
Base Atk +13; **Grp** +16
Atk Options aligned strike (chaotic, evil), poison (DC 22, 2d6 damage/1d6 Con)
Special Actions *summon tanar'ri*
Spell-Like Abilities (CL 13th):
At will—*freedom of movement, greater teleport* (self plus 50 pounds of objects only)
3/day—*charm monster* (tanar'ri only, DC 18)

Abilities Str 17, Dex 14, Con 19, Int 16, Wis 13, Cha 18
SA aligned strike, fetid cloud, poison, spell-like abilities, *summon tanar'ri*
Feats Ability Focus (poison), Dodge, Improved Initiative, Mobility, Spring Attack
Skills Balance +20, Bluff +20, Climb +19, Concentration +11, Diplomacy +8, Disguise +4 (+6 acting), Escape Artist +10, Hide +18, Intimidate +22, Jump +21, Knowledge (the planes) +11, Listen +17, Move Silently +18, Sense Motive +17, Spot +17, Survival +1 (+3 on other planes), Swim +19, Tumble +20
Advancement 14–26 HD (Medium); 27–39 HD (Large)

Fetid Cloud (Su) An adaru constantly sprays a thin cloud of vile mist in a 30-foot-radius spread. All non-evil creatures in the area are sickened while within the cloud. All evil-aligned creatures other than adarus gain a +2 profane bonus on attack rolls, damage rolls, saving throws, skill checks, and ability checks when in the cloud.

This mist slicks the ground around the adaru, and its wounds spray the same vile fluid. When an adaru is reduced to half of its full normal hit points or fewer, each square within 30 feet of it requires 2 squares of movement for a non-evil creature to enter. This effect doesn't stack with that of any existing difficult terrain.

Summon Tanar'ri (Sp) 50% chance to summon 1d4 babaus; 1/day; caster level 10th. This ability is the equivalent of a 4th-level spell.

Skills An adaru has a +8 racial bonus on Balance, Climb, Escape Artist, and Swim checks. It can take 10 on Climb checks, even if rushed or threatened, and it can choose to take 10 on a Swim check, even if distracted or endangered. An adaru can use the run action when swimming, provided it swims in a straight line.

Adarus are cunning demons that function best when leading bands of other tanar'ri into battle. They are beings of utter corruption, as well as capable leaders that bolster their followers and hinder their foes.

Strategies and Tactics

An adaru always has a cadre of fawning followers that it has charmed or lured into service. When battle is joined, the adaru first orders its minions to engage. It then moves to a position where its fetid cloud turns the tide against its foes and benefits the greatest number of its allies.

Of all its abilities, the adaru's greatest asset is its speed. Adarus can scuttle across nearly any terrain, swim though most types of fluid, and even burrow through solid rock. An adaru's *freedom of movement* ability gives it even more mobility, defying the snares opponents might try against

ADARU LORE

Characters who have ranks in Knowledge (the planes) can learn more about adarus. When a character makes a successful skill check, the following lore is revealed, including the information from lower DCs.

Knowledge (the Planes)

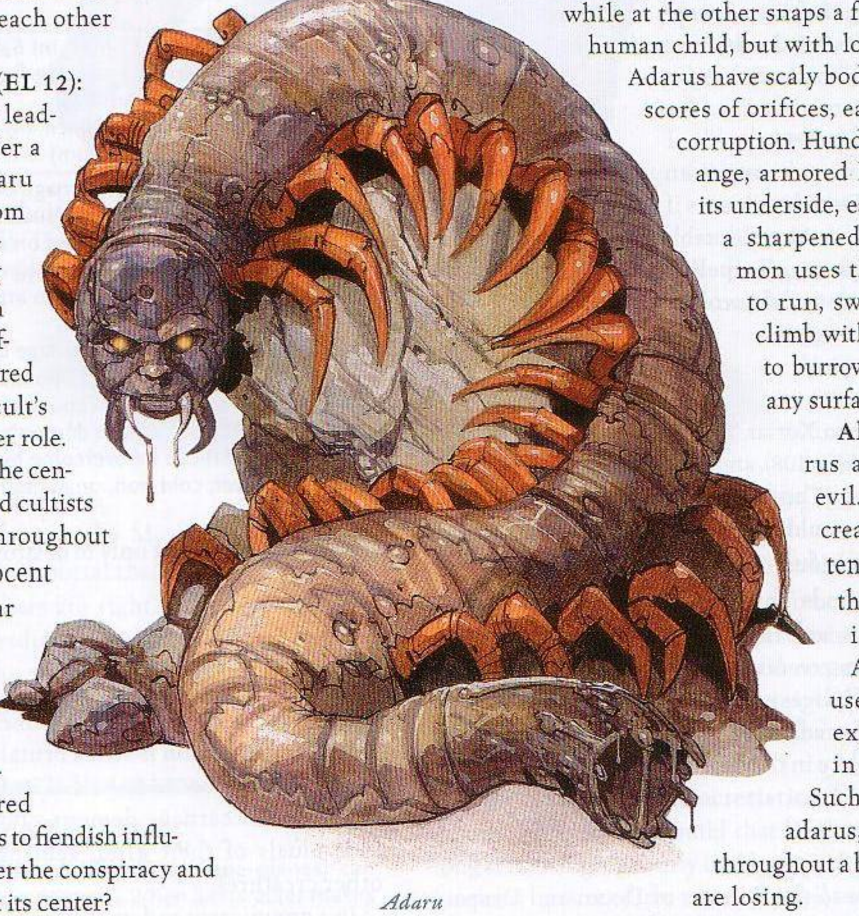
DC	Result
20	This tanar'ri demon from the Abyss is an adaru. No terrain presents a serious obstacle for adarus. They use their mobility to slip past their opponents' defenses to land a poisoned bite.
25	Adarus are resistant to spells, but good-aligned weapons can penetrate their dense hides.
30	An adaru can use the special organs dimpling its body to release a spray that sickens the good and emboldens the wicked. This substance slicks the ground, further hindering those who aren't evil.

it. It fearlessly combines Dodge, Mobility, and Tumble to move to any position it desires on the battlefield; it prefers flanking positions that aid its underlings. Spring Attack allows it to deliver nasty bites while avoiding immediate retaliation, possibly crawling up a wall to a place unreachable by its opponents. It uses *greater teleport* to escape an unfavorable battle.

Sample Encounter

Adarus are never found alone. In the Abyss and elsewhere, they have a following of demons and other wicked creatures. Adarus are not above using any creature as a crony, but they prefer babaus. Those cruel fiends mirror the adaru's sensibilities, and the two complement each other in combat.

Cult of Mal'tanx (EL 12): When a foolish cult leader opened a gate under a peaceful city, the adaru Mal'tanx slipped from the Abyss with its four babau minions (*MM* 40). Displeased with the sacrifice the cult offered, Mal'tanx murdered and devoured the cult's leader and assumed her role. Now the adaru sits at the center of a web of depraved cultists that hold positions throughout the city. When innocent folk start to disappear to feed Mal'tanx's degeneracy, and a few good-hearted leaders in the city are murdered within the safety of secured homes, evidence points to fiendish influence. Who can uncover the conspiracy and deal with the fiends at its center?



Adaru

Illus. by C. Critchlow

Ecology

Adarus are treachery and deception given form. When a mortal speaks an untruth that has grave consequences, it is said that a new adaru is born, taking shape in the bowels of the Abyss. It experiences a sudden awareness and a powerful urge to work wickedness. A number of adarus spend their existence searching for the mortals that awakened them, scouring the planes to reward their creators with excruciating pain and endless torment.

As tanar'ri, adarus have no need for food or drink, but they feast all the same. They savor the bloody gobbets torn from their victims, exclaiming at the savory fluids and relishing the morsels that slide into their gullets. Adarus are also famed for taking trophies. Fascinated by other shapes and forms of flesh, adarus take and keep body parts they do not possess.

Environment: Adarus are native to the Infinite Layers of the Abyss. They are most common on the 444th layer, where their terrifying corruption has transformed the barren landscape into a soupy morass of sticky mud. On it float dismembered body parts harvested from the countless petitioners cursed to spend an eternity of torment in the mud's depths.

Typical Physical Characteristics: An adaru's body grows up to 8 feet long and weighs as much as 250 pounds. At its hind end is a great sucking organ crusted with filth, while at the other snaps a face like that of a human child, but with long brown fangs. Adarus have scaly bodies, marred with scores of orifices, each one spraying corruption. Hundreds of bright orange, armored legs extend from its underside, each narrowing to a sharpened point. The demon uses these appendages to run, swim, tumble, and climb with eerie grace, and to burrow through almost any surface.

Alignment: Adarus are born chaotic evil. They are pitiless creatures whose existence is defined by the suffering they inflict on others. Adarus carelessly use their minions, expending them in great numbers. Such massacres amuse adarus, and they giggle throughout a battle, even if they are losing.

Society

Adarus are intimately aware of their standing when compared to the more powerful denizens of the Abyss. They pale before the sheer brutality of the balors and the savagery of the goristros (*Fiendish Codex I* 40). However, many wise and mighty demons have a use for the cunning adarus, who employ all sorts of trickery to form squads of brutal minions.

To make up their lack of raw power, adarus worm their way into the minds of lesser fiends, lying and making false promises. Some see through the cheap ploys, but the weak and desperate are easily fooled, especially when faced with an opportunity to increase their own standing. Thus, adarus recruit heavily from lesser demons, exploiting them and discarding them with caprice. Those that can't be cajoled are *charmed* and end up doing the adaru's bidding anyway.

Typical Treasure

Adarus love wealth and collect it as a sign of their importance. They equally enjoy grisly trophies, keeping all sorts of body parts that are adorned with the belongings of the fallen. Such mementos remind the adaru of its specific victims as it picks over its treasures, chuckling and recalling the fond memories of the torment it inflicted. An adaru possesses standard treasure for a creature of its Challenge Rating. It favors jewelry and items that bring up memories of its misdeeds, but it also keeps coins and gems to use as bribes.

For Player Characters

An evil spellcaster can summon an adaru using a *summon monster IX* spell. Treat the adaru as if it were on the 9th-level list on the Summon Monster table (*PH* 287). Evil clerics can use a *greater planar ally* spell to call an adaru, but the adaru's payment demand involves the sacrifice of intelligent beings.

Adarus in Eberron

Adarus are native to Xoriat. Eons ago, they were rivals of the kaortis (*Fiend Folio* 108), and they were powerful enough to wage all-out war. The campaign was doomed from the start—the adarus could not form a solid coalition against their enemies. Individual adarus betrayed the war effort to further their own ends. This turn of events led to a series of devastating defeats, and the adarus were driven almost to extinction. In the intervening centuries, they have recovered, and they now seek places on Eberron to work their wickedness. More than a few adarus wish to free imprisoned daelkyr, hoping to earn a place in the terrestrial courts of the mighty lords of madness.

Adarus in Faerûn

Adarus are native to the Barrens of Doom and Despair, where they scour the varied landscapes for larvae and gather armies of lesser fiends to throw at one another in internecine war. Talona created them, and large numbers of adarus infest the swamps around the Palace of Poison Tears. There they spread their corruption, working to expand the swamp and their mistress's influence on the Barrens and other planes.

CARNAGE DEMON

Rushing forward, uttering an unintelligible battle cry, is a broad-shouldered creature with overlong arms that end in massively oversized, clawed hands. Similar creatures follow it, seemingly drawing strength from their proximity to one another.

CARNAGE DEMON CR 4

Always CE Medium outsider (chaotic, evil, extraplanar)
Init +0; **Senses** darkvision 60 ft.; Listen +4, Spot +4
Languages Abyssal

AC 13, touch 10, flat-footed 13
(+3 natural)
hp 19 (3 HD); **DR** 5/silver
Immune electricity, poison
Resist acid 10, cold 10, fire 10
Fort +7, **Ref** +3, **Will** +3
Weakness destructive appetite

Speed 30 ft. (6 squares)
Melee 2 slams +8 each (1d4+5)
Space 5 ft.; **Reach** 5 ft.
Base Atk +3; **Grp** +8
Atk Options aligned strike (chaotic, evil), carnage, reaving fists

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Abilities Str 20, Dex 10, Con 14, Int 5, Wis 6, Cha 6
SA aligned strike, carnage, reaving fists
Feats Great Fortitude, Iron Will
Skills Climb +11, Jump +11, Listen +4, Spot +4, Survival +4
Advancement 4–9 HD (Medium)

Destructive Appetite (Ex) A carnage demon is a threat even to its allies. After every successful melee attack, a carnage demon must succeed on a DC 14 Will save. If it fails, it attacks the nearest creature that is not a carnage demon whenever it is unable to attack an enemy during a given round.

Carnage (Su) For each other carnage demon within 30 feet, a carnage demon gains a +1 bonus on attack rolls and damage rolls, up to a maximum of +5.

Reaving Fists (Ex) A carnage demon's slams ignore damage reduction that can be overcome by any metallic material such as silver, cold iron, or adamantine.

Carnage demons exist only to destroy, and they revel in the ruin they wreak.

Strategies and Tactics

Despite having massive claws, which they use to climb, carnage demons prefer to pummel their opponents. A lone carnage demon is still a brutal adversary, but such a loner flees if reduced to half of its full normal hit points or fewer. All carnage demons prefer to fight alongside individuals of their kind, venting their hatred on all other creatures.

In a group, carnage demons remain close to each other as they attack. Each one lets its fury rather than any sense of tactics dictate where its next attack is aimed, usually pounding whoever damaged it the most during the previous round. If fighting opponents that have no silvered weapons, carnage demons gladly provoke attacks of opportunity to get in among their enemies, quickly overwhelming softer targets such as spellcasters.

Carnage demons are a danger to all creatures that aren't carnage demons. A carnage demon that has succumbed to its destructive appetite attacks nearby allies for no better reason than being unable to move to an enemy and attack it during the current round.

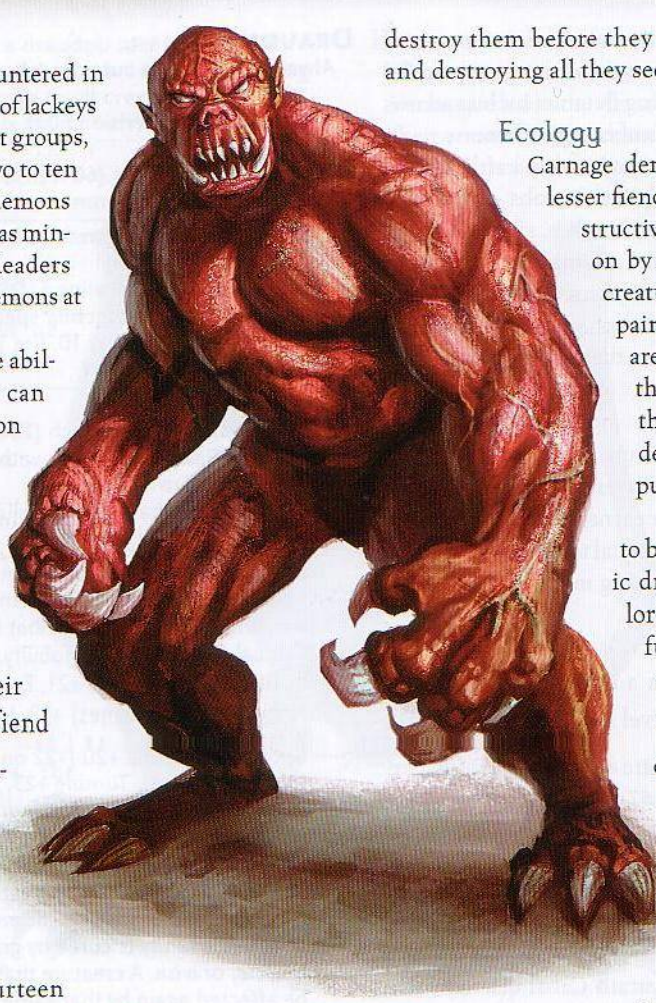
Sample Encounters

Carnage demons are encountered in groups, ranging from a pair of lackeys to mobs of thousands. Most groups, however, are made up of two to ten of these creatures. Other demons might use carnage demons as minions, but such demonic leaders wisely keep the carnage demons at a distance.

Any demon that has the ability to summon dretches can instead choose to summon half that number of carnage demons.

Arrogant Assassin (EL 6): A powerful enemy of the PCs has dispatched a vrock (*MM* 48) to eliminate them. The vrock appears in their midst, but the fickle fiend deems the characters unworthy foes. It instead summons three carnage demons to do the deed, then uses *greater teleport* to find more entertaining prey.

Rampage (EL 9): Fourteen carnage demons made it to the Material Plane through an ancient portal that functions only when the stars are right. They've destroyed a small outpost and a trading thorp, losing six of their number in the process. The pack of eight's current path leads to an unsuspecting village. PCs have to track the fiends and destroy them before they tear through the town, killing and destroying all they see.



Carnage demon

CARNAGE DEMON LORE

Characters who have ranks in Knowledge (the planes) can learn more about carnage demons. When a character makes a successful skill check, the following lore is revealed, including the information from lower DCs.

Knowledge (the Planes)

DC	Result
14	This is a carnage demon, a fiend from the Abyss that lives only to kill in as injurious a manner as possible. This result reveals all outsider traits.
19	Carnage demons are resistant to most forms of energy, and they have skin that only silver can cut through reliably.
24	A carnage demon's fists can pound through nearly any material. The more carnage demons present, the more powerful their attacks become.

Ecology

Carnage demons are the brutes among the lesser fiends of the Abyss. They are the destructive manifestation of chaos, spurred on by a burning desire to batter other creatures in the bloodiest and most painful ways possible. Although they are similar in power to dretches, they don't share the aimlessness of those dull fiends. Instead, carnage demons are filled with the singular purpose of pure destruction.

Some consider carnage demons to be a forced evolution of the pathetic dretches, the product of a demon lord's attempt to create a more useful lesser demon. This theory gains some credence from the fact that, unlike most demons, carnage demons are not tanar'ri. Their vulnerability to silvered weapons suggests they might have been created using materials from or related to devils.

Environment: Carnage demons, like most demons, are extraplanar creatures that are native to the Infinite Layers of the Abyss. Mobs of carnage demons can be found anywhere on that plane. They are always eager to spread destruction and slaughter, so they use any portal or gate they encounter, having no concern for where it might lead. As such, carnage demons can also be found near any place that harbors a gateway to the Abyss.

Typical Physical Characteristics: A carnage demon has a powerful humanoid build that borders on apelike, with long arms hanging nearly to the ground. Those arms end in forearms the size of tree trunks, as well as stubby hands with thick fingers and claws. The fiend's fanged mouth takes up most of its face, and its head seems slightly smaller than is proportional for its body.

Carnage demons have skin that ranges from a bloody crimson to a darker red-brown. A typical carnage demon stands nearly 6 feet tall and weighs over 300 pounds.

Alignment: Carnage demons embody destructive malevolence. Not only do they spread wanton violence, they also enjoy inflicting suffering.

Society

The carnage demon's particular purpose of mad destruction doesn't lend itself to fitting into any organized society, even

Illus. by M. Coimbra

a demonic one. Its dim intellect allows it to be easily enticed by the promise of devastation. In many cases, more powerful fiends, especially the more cunning demons such as adarus or succubi, loosely control groups of carnage demons.

In the vast hordes of fiendish armies that battle on the Lower Planes, demonic generals send mobs of carnage demons behind the first waves of dretches, since dretches are more likely to rush toward the enemy if the threat of death at the fists of carnage demons is spurring them onward. Carnage demons are perfect shock troops—their savagery brings fear, death, and confusion to the opposing forces.

Typical Treasure

Carnage demons carry no possessions. Greater demons that employ these fiends might send scavengers to scrounge for valuables from the victims of the carnage demons, so such overlords have additional treasure equal to what a creature of the carnage demon's Challenge Rating might carry.

For Player Characters

An evil spellcaster can summon a carnage demon using *summon monster IV* or a higher-level *summon monster* spell. Treat the carnage demon as if it were on the 4th-level list on the Summon Monster table (*PH* 287).

Carnage Demons in Eberron

Carnage demons are native to Shavarath, the Battleground, where they are the vanguard of demonic forces that assault the fortresses of that plane. During the Last War, conjurers from a group known as the Shavarath Cabal offered their services as experts in siege warfare. Once employed, these spellcasters could overwhelm nearly any fortification, leaving no survivors. Rumors persist that the members of the Shavarath Cabal trafficked with fiends from the Battleground, using mobs of carnage demons, letting them loose on targeted strongholds. None yet live to substantiate those claims. Where the members of the cabal are now, in the aftermath of the Last War, remains a mystery.

DRAUDNU

A hairless creature about the size of a human surges forward on three muscular legs attached to its top. Swollen sacs of fluid bulge from its body. A single pulsing red eye stares out from a mass of featureless wrinkled flesh that must be the creature's head, but that mass is at the creature's bottom. From around its eye extend three arms, each ending in a hook of bone.

DRAUDNU CR 10

Always CE Medium outsider (chaotic, evil, extraplanar, obyrith)

Init +4; **Senses** darkvision 60 ft., true seeing; Listen +20, Spot +20

Aura form of madness (60 ft.)

Languages Abyssal, Common; telepathy 100 ft.

AC 21, touch 14, flat-footed 17; Dodge, Mobility (+4 Dex, +7 natural)

hp 119 (14 HD); fast healing 5; **DR** 10/lawful

Immune acid, mind-affecting spells and abilities, poison

Resist cold 10, electricity 10, fire 10; **SR** 18

Fort +13, **Ref** +13, **Will** +12

Speed 50 ft. (10 squares)

Melee 3 flesh hooks +18 each (2d6+4/19–20 plus immobilize)

Space 5 ft.; **Reach** 5 ft. (20 ft. with flesh hooks)

Base Atk +14; **Grp** +18

Atk Options Combat Reflexes, aligned strike (chaotic, evil)

Special Actions acid spray

Abilities Str 18, Dex 19, Con 18, Int 13, Wis 16, Cha 17

SA acid spray, aligned strike, form of madness, immobilize

Feats Combat Expertise, Combat Reflexes, Dodge, Improved Critical (flesh hooks), Mobility, Track^B

Skills Balance +30, Climb +21, Escape Artist +21, Jump +31, Knowledge (the planes) +10, Listen +20, Search +18, Spot +20, Survival +20 (+22 on other planes, +22 following tracks), Tumble +23, Use Rope +4 (+6 bindings)

Advancement 19–36 HD (Medium); 37–54 HD (Large)

Form of Madness (Su) When a draudnu comes within 60 feet of a creature, that creature must succeed on a DC 20 Will save or believe that something is growing inside it, becoming sickened. The sickened condition is permanent until the insanity is cured by *greater restoration, heal, miracle,* or *wish.* A creature that successfully saves cannot be affected again by that same draudnu's form for 24 hours, and a creature that fails can be affected only once until cured. Chaotic evil outsiders are immune to this ability. This is a mind-affecting ability. The save DC is Charisma-based.

Immobilize (Ex) When a draudnu deals damage with a flesh hook, it can detach the end of that hook in the foe it struck, fastening that opponent to a surface such as a floor or wall. (The draudnu's hook end regrows immediately.) That enemy must succeed on a DC 21 Reflex save or be immobilized (see sidebar). This ability doesn't work if the hook can't fasten a creature to a surface. The save DC is Strength-based.

An immobilized opponent can pull itself free by taking a move action and making a DC 21 Strength check or Escape Artist check. However, the act of pulling free deals that foe 1d10 points of damage, unless it or someone else takes a standard action and succeeds on a DC 21 Heal check to dislodge the hook first. The check DCs are Strength-based.

NEW CONDITION: IMMOBILIZED

Introduced in *Tome of Magic,* the immobilized condition prevents a creature from moving from the space in which it starts its turn. An immobilized creature can attack and cast spells, and it keeps its Dexterity bonus to Armor Class. Flying creatures that become immobilized when aloft can control their descent so they don't take falling damage, but they are incapable of moving from their current space until the condition ends, descending at a rate of 20 feet per round. If an immobilized flying creature can hover, it can maintain its altitude, but it still can't move from its space until the condition ends.

Acid Spray (Ex) Whenever a draudnu takes damage, it sprays acidic fluid from the sacs on its body, dealing 2d4 points of acid damage to all creatures in a 5-foot-radius burst (Reflex DC 21 half). The save DC is Constitution-based.

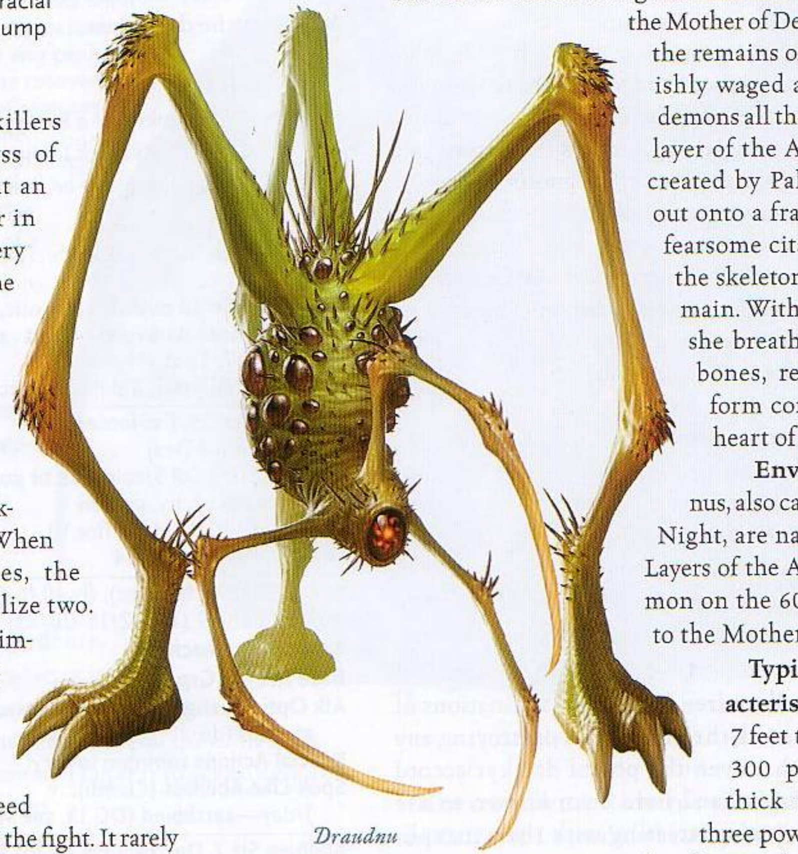
Skills Draudnus have a +8 racial bonus on Balance and Jump checks.

Draudnus are ruthless killers created to rid the Abyss of non-obyriths. They fight an eternal but hopeless war in the fields of ruin and misery that make up the vile home of demons.

Strategies and Tactics

A draudnu charges to within reach of its foes, then begins madly hacking away with its hooks. When facing multiple enemies, the draudnu tries to immobilize two. It then focuses its ire on immobilized targets, felling them as quickly as possible before moving on to new foes.

A draudnu uses its speed and Mobility to command the fight. It rarely eschews attacking, instead making a single attack and using Combat Expertise to increase its AC if it needs to close the gap between itself and a chosen target.



Draudnu

Sample Encounter

Draudnus, like other obyriths, are scarce, having been hunted nearly to extinction by the tanar'ri. Antisocial by nature, they are rarely encountered in groups that contain more than four members.

A Hard Place (EL 12): A pack of three draudnus emerged onto the Material Plane through an ancient gate, pursuing a gang of five babaus (*MM* 40). An evil conjurer activated the gate and dispatched the babaus to kill a priest of a mountaintop church of Pelor and retrieve an item housed there. Unaware that the draudnus slew their employer, the babaus snuck into the church, leaving their tracks about the grounds. The draudnus soon followed and assaulted the church directly, one of their number falling in a pitched battle that took the lives of a large number of clerics and monks. Reveling in the chaos, the babaus have hidden within the church's catacombs while the draudnus lay siege to the church's sanctuary. Only once the draudnus are killed or driven away do the babaus make their play for their target.

Ecology

Since the terrifying days when Obox-Ob, Demon Prince of Vermin, ruled in the Abyss, before the tanar'ri rose up and cast their creators down, draudnus have always been born in the bone fields surrounding the nameless castle of Pale Night, the Mother of Demons. Formed from the remains of eladrins who foolishly waged a campaign against demons all the way into the 600th layer of the Abyss, draudnus are created by Pale Night. She steps out onto a fragile balcony of her fearsome citadel and gazes over the skeletons that litter her domain. With a dreadful whisper, she breathes life into eladrin bones, recasting them in a form conceived in the very heart of lunacy.

Environment: Draudnus, also called Children of Pale Night, are native to the Infinite Layers of the Abyss. They are common on the 600th layer, enslaved to the Mother of Demons.

Typical Physical Characteristics: Draudnus stand 7 feet tall and weigh about 300 pounds. They have thick and rubbery skin, three powerful legs, and three arms, each ending in a hook of bone wrapped in hardened, scaly flesh. Their bodies, which seem to be biologically reversed, are covered in dark blisters that pop

DRAUDNU LORE

Characters who have ranks in Knowledge (the planes) can learn more about draudnus. When a character makes a successful skill check, the following lore is revealed, including the information from lower DCs.

Knowledge (the Planes)

DC	Result
20	A draudnu, as this creature is called, is a demon from the Abyss. The draudnu is a fierce fighter that can extend its hooks up to 15 feet. It can detach hooks to hold its prey in place.
25	Draudnus have acid-filled sacs all over their skin, and these sacs burst when the demon is struck. Lawful-aligned weapons are effective against them.
30	The draudnu belongs to a rare race of demon known as obyriths. All draudnus are resistant to spells. This result reveals all obyrith traits.
35	Those who look upon a draudnu come to believe that they have something growing inside them, a sickening thought that can't be shaken.

Illus. by J. Zhang

when struck. On its face, a draudnu has a bloody red eye where its mouth should be.

Alignment: Draudnus are born without an ounce of kindness, wild with a thirst for vengeance and bloodshed. They are always chaotic evil.

Society

Draudnus were created to hunt and to kill. These fiends go forth bent on murder, filled with a hatred of all creatures except obyriths. They mercilessly slay anything they can, especially the minions of Baphomet on the 600th layer of the Abyss, reveling in destruction and bloody torment. Born from the corruption of the remains of celestials, they retain little of the memories and none of the harmonious virtues of their former selves. They fear only their ancient mother, Pale Night.

Typical Treasure

Draudnus have no use for wealth, treasure, or anything of the kind. They have none.

Draudnus in Eberron

Xoriat, the Realm of Madness, is home to the obyriths of Eberron. Although a great and varied number of creatures call this plane home, none so accurately reflect its character like this race of demons. Divorced from the constant scheming of the daelkyr, free from the machinations of the kaorti, obyriths stalk the dim places, destroying any who cross their paths. Even the potent daelkyr accord these odd fiends respect and have been known to use them as go-betweens when treating with their inexplicable masters.

Draudnus in Faerûn

Demonologists in Faerûn speculate that obyriths predated the existence of the tanar'ri in the Abyss, but during a terrifying rebellion, they were nearly driven to extinction. For eons they have lurked on the fringes, watching their rightful home being torn asunder by the legions of tanar'ri in their endless Blood War. But it is fast becoming clear, with the sudden resurgence of these ancient fiends, that the obyriths are no longer content to wait and watch, for an army gathers in the Barrens of Doom and Despair. This army, made up of horrors that defy description, musters under the fiery sky, and the most numerous of all in the ranks are the draudnus.

GADACRO

A creature that looks like a bat-winged child with purple skin dives from the air, its black talons stretching out for your eyes. A necklace that appears to be fashioned from eyeballs dangles about its neck.

GADACRO CR 3

Always CE Small outsider (chaotic, evil, extraplanar, tanar'ri)
Init +4; **Senses** darkvision 120 ft., superior low-light vision; Listen +7, Spot +11
Languages Abyssal, Celestial, Draconic; telepathy 100 ft.

AC 15, touch 15, flat-footed 11
(+1 size, +4 Dex)
hp 26 (4 HD); **DR** 5/cold iron or good; sudden escape
Immune electricity, poison
Resist acid 10, cold 10, fire 10
Fort +6, **Ref** +8, **Will** +4

Speed 20 ft. (4 squares), fly 40 ft. (perfect); Flyby Attack
Melee talon +9 (1d6–2/18–20/×3)
Space 5 ft.; **Reach** 5 ft.
Base Atk +4; **Grp** –2
Atk Options aligned strike (chaotic, evil), eyethief, sneak attack +1d6
Special Actions *summon tanar'ri*
Spell-Like Abilities (CL 4th):
1/day—*earthbind* (DC 13, see sidebar), *mirror image*

Abilities Str 7, Dex 18, Con 15, Int 8, Wis 10, Cha 12
SA aligned strike, eyethief, sneak attack, spell-like abilities, sudden escape, *summon tanar'ri*
Feats Flyby Attack, Weapon Finesse
Skills Balance +11, Escape Artist +15, Hide +15, Listen +7, Move Silently +11, Search +6, Spot +11
Advancement 5–8 HD (Small); 9–12 HD (Medium)

Superior Low-Light Vision (Ex) An gadacro sees four times as well as a human does in shadowy illumination.

Sudden Escape (Ex) If an gadacro takes damage from a melee attack, it can, as an immediate action, disappear

NEW SPELL: EARTHBIND

Transmutation
Level: Druid 2, sorcerer/wizard 2
Components: V, S
Casting Time: 1 standard action
Range: Medium (100 ft. + 10 ft./level)
Target: One creature
Duration: 1 minute/level (D)
Saving Throw: Fortitude negates
Spell Resistance: Yes

You intone words of binding and point at your foe. Yellow strings of magical energy loop about its wings, dragging it to ground.

You hinder the subject's ability to fly (whether through natural or magical means) for the duration of the spell. If the target fails its saving throw, its fly speed (if any) becomes 0 feet. An airborne creature subjected to this spell falls to the ground as if under the effect of a *feather fall* spell. Even if a new effect would grant the creature the ability to fly, that effect is suppressed for the duration of the *earthbind* spell.

Earthbind has no effect on other forms of movement, or even on effects that might grant airborne movement without granting a fly speed (such as jumping or *levitate* or *air walk* spells).

in a puff of smoke and brimstone and reappear in a square up to 20 feet away to which it has line of sight.

Eyethief (Ex) An gadacro can forgo its sneak attack damage or extra damage on a confirmed critical hit to instead blind its opponent for 5 rounds. A creature that has been blinded in this way cannot be affected again until it has recovered from the current effect. Creatures that lack eyes are immune.

Summon Tanar'ri (Sp) 35% chance to summon 1d2 gadacros; 1/day; caster level 4th. This ability is the equivalent of a 2nd-level spell.

Skills Gadacros have a +4 racial bonus on Escape Artist and Spot checks.

A gadacro is a vicious lesser demon that torments its foes by blinding them.

Strategies and Tactics

Gadacros are wild and reckless, using Flyby Attack to slash and harry their opponents. Once they blind a foe, the gadacros in a group surround that creature, intent on tearing it apart. If the battle turns against them, they fall back to use *mirror image* and *summon tanar'ri* to seemingly and literally inflate their numbers.

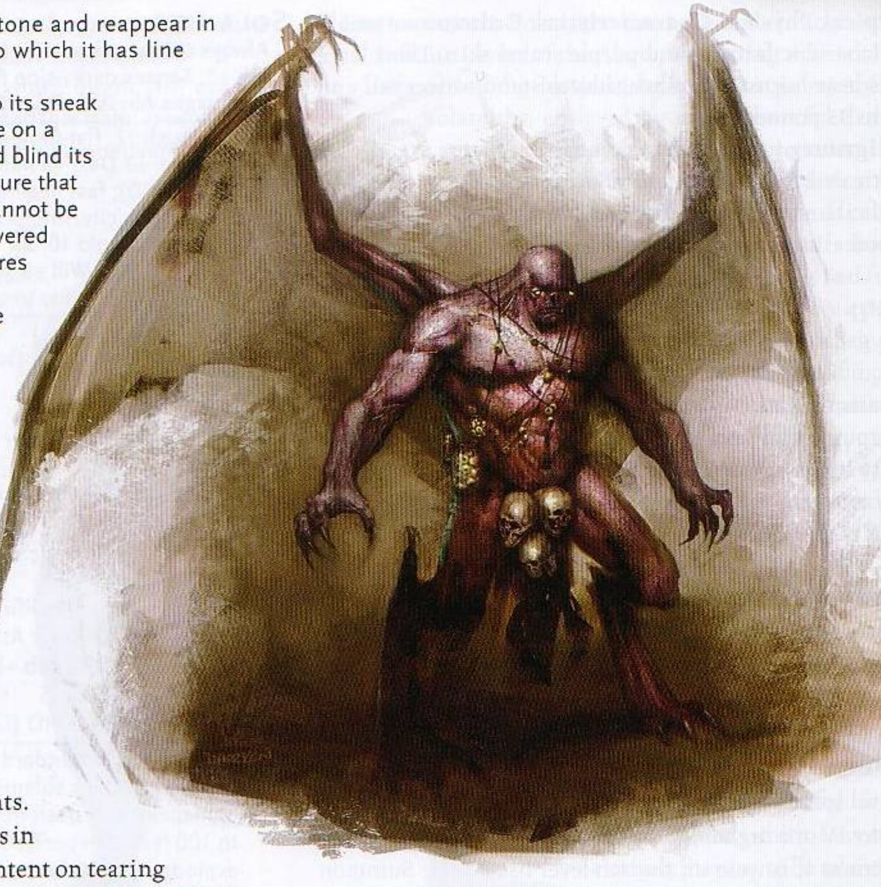
Sample Encounter

Gadacros are like carrion birds, following demonic hosts to pick off the stragglers or torment the survivors left in the wake of war. These demons collect in clutches of two to six, or murders of seven to twelve.

Murder of Eyes (EL 9): A moderately skilled wizard fascinated with seeing and eyes discovered information about the gadacro in a codex he recently acquired. Fascinated, he engaged in a ritual designed to call and bind one of the creatures so he could study it. He botched the ceremony, and a murder of nine gadacros burst through the brief rift to the Abyss created thereafter. The wizard's manor contains enough other creatures that the gadacros have been entertained, but one person who went to call on the wizard has disappeared, and a few creatures that could have come only from the wizard's home have troubled the town.

Ecology

Despite having no need for sustenance, gadacros crave the flesh of the living all the same. Specifically, they relish their victims' eyes, preferably plucked from the skull of a victim that still lives. Gadacros rarely agree on who among them should have the right to eat the tastiest bits.



Gadacro

Illus. by Daarken

Environment: Gadacros can be found anywhere in the Infinite Layers of the Abyss, though they are common in the Screaming Peaks of Yeenoghu's Realm on the 422nd layer.

GADACRO LORE

Characters who have ranks in Knowledge (the planes) can learn more about gadacros. When a character makes a successful skill check, the following lore is revealed, including the information from lower DCs.

Knowledge (the Planes)

DC	Result
13	A demon from the Abyss, this creature is known as a gadacro. It is cowardly yet savage, and its talons are deadly. This result reveals all outsider and tanar'ri traits.
18	When a gadacro hits an opponent solidly, that foe goes temporarily blind. The demon can also make illusory duplicates of itself and bind flying creatures to the earth.
23	Gadacros are hard to kill and extremely mobile. They can transport themselves away from danger immediately, and their scaly skin turns away normal weapons. Good-aligned or cold iron weapons can easily harm them.

Typical Physical Characteristics: Gadacros are small, with cherubic features and purple scaled skin. Their large heads bear horns. A typical gadacro stands 4 feet tall and weighs 35 pounds.

Alignment: Like other demons, gadacros are always chaotic evil. They betray one another whenever doing so is beneficial, and they slay any creature they can, prolonging the ordeal as long as it is safe to do so.

Society

Each gadacro group has a single leader. Smarter, stronger, and quicker than the rest, the leader attains its position by assassinating its rivals. It then pits the other members of the group against one another, using favoritism to engender loyalty in certain members. Of course, the disaffected resent this treatment, and eventually replace the leader with one of theirs.

Typical Treasure

Gadacros love shiny objects, and they favor baubles they can wear or easily carry. A gadacro has standard treasure for its Challenge Rating.

For Player Characters

An evil spellcaster can summon a gadacro using *summon monster IV* or a higher-level *summon monster* spell. Treat the gadacro as if it were on the 4th-level list on the Summon Monster table (*PH* 287).

Gadacros in Eberron

Gadacros haunt the ruins left in the aftermath of the eternal struggles of Shavarath. Although they torture the injured outsiders they find, they actually perform a useful service. Once a warrior dies and is consumed, its essence is absorbed into the plane and eventually reborn to fight once more.

Gadacros in Faerûn

Gadacros gather on the ledges and crevices of the Blood Rift. Having nothing to do with the Blood War, they instead torment the lost and unwary and pick the eye sockets of the slain. A few gadacros act as spies for balors, but these informants are unreliable at best.

SOLAMITH

A corpulent monstrosity at least 10 feet tall lumbers forward on slablike legs. Rings of flabby flesh cradle its horned head. Pressing out against the green-veined and pallid skin of its great gut are screaming faces.

SOLAMITH **CR 8**

Always CE Large outsider (chaotic, evil, extraplanar, tanar'ri)
Init +3; **Senses** darkvision 60 ft.; Listen +15, Spot +15
Languages Abyssal, Celestial, Draconic; telepathy 100 ft.

AC 21, touch 12, flat-footed 18
(–1 size, +3 Dex, +9 natural)
hp 115 (11 HD); fast healing 5; **DR** 5/magic or good
Immune electricity, fire, poison
Resist acid 10, cold 10; **SR** 16
Fort +13, **Ref** +10, **Will** +8
Weakness vulnerability to cold

Speed 40 ft. (8 squares)
Melee 2 slams +14 each (1d8+4)
Space 10 ft.; **Reach** 10 ft.
Base Atk +11; **Grp** +19
Atk Options Cleave, Power Attack, aligned strike (chaotic, evil), magic strike
Special Actions soulfire, soulfire retort, *summon tanar'ri*

Abilities Str 19, Dex 16, Con 23, Int 4, Wis 13, Cha 8
SA aligned strike, magic strike, soulfire, soulfire retort, *summon tanar'ri*
Feats Ability Focus (soulfire), Cleave, Improved Natural Attack (slam), Power Attack
Skills Balance +17, Climb +18, Intimidate +13, Jump +8, Listen +15, Spot +15
Advancement 12–22 HD (Large); 23–33 HD (Huge)

Soulfire (Su) As a standard action that provokes attacks of opportunity, a solamith can deal itself 5 points of damage to tear flesh from its body and hurl that flesh up to 100 feet with perfect accuracy. When it lands, the flesh explodes in a 20-foot-radius burst, dealing 4d6 points of damage, half of which is fire damage (Reflex DC 23 half). Solamiths are immune to soulfire. The save DC is Constitution-based.

By dealing itself an extra 5 points of damage, a solamith can widen the burst to a 40-foot radius. By dealing itself an extra 10 points of damage, a solamith can make the burst deal maximum damage. A solamith can use both of these abilities on the same soulfire attack, but takes damage for each.

Soulfire Retort (Su) Whenever a solamith takes damage from an opponent's melee attack, it can unleash a 15-foot cone of soulfire as a swift action on its next turn. The cone deals damage as soulfire, above (Reflex DC 21 half). The save DC is Constitution-based.

Summon Tanar'ri (Sp) 40% chance to summon 1d2 solamiths; 1/day; caster level 11th. This ability is the equivalent of a 4th-level spell.

A solamith is a manifestation of depraved gluttony and burning hunger, drawing energy from the spirits it devours. That power charges its flesh with spiritual fire, which it uses against its enemies by tearing away and hurling bits of its own body.

Strategies and Tactics

Solamiths don't bother to close with enemies, instead hurling soulfire from the beginning of combat. Although dim-witted, they have keen spatial awareness and an intuitive sense of how to best use this ability. A solamith opens with a soulfire attack that deals maximum damage, and it increase the area of its soulfire burst whenever doing so allows it to catch more enemies in the blast. If it can, it maneuvers to continue using its soulfire as long as possible. A solamith that has lost more than half its hit points makes the smallest soulfire attacks it can.

When forced into melee, a solamith might still use soulfire, but it can also use its formidable slam. It uses a soulfire cone whenever it can, but first maneuvers to catch other foes in the blast.

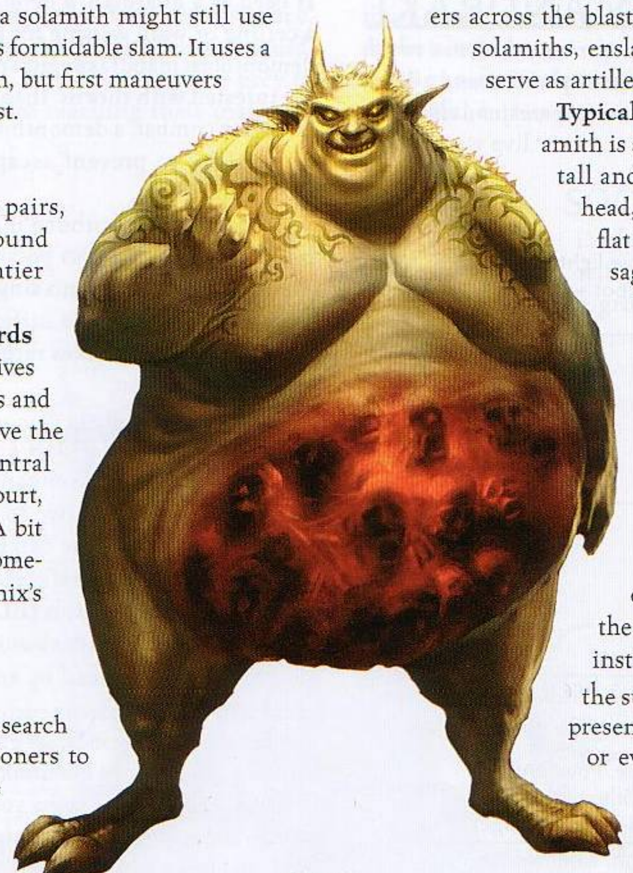
Sample Encounter

Solamiths roam singly or in pairs, but they are commonly found among the troops of mightier fiends.

Quinix's Gatehouse Guards (EL 10): Quinix the glabrezu lives in a ruined city where gnolls and lesser fiends serve him. Above the ruined gates of the city's central citadel where Quinix holds court, two solamiths keep watch. A bit too zealous, the solamiths sometimes attack gnolls and Quinix's other servants.

Ecology

Solamiths prowl the Abyss in search of lesser demons and petitioners to eat, even though they require no sustenance. A solamith tears its victims to pieces, but then becomes a dainty eater, chewing slowly and appreciating the spiritual effervescence of each morsel. Once a meal is finished, a new face appears just under the skin on a solamith's gut, silently pleading for release.



Solamith

SOLAMITH LORE

Characters who have ranks in Knowledge (the planes) can learn more about solamiths. When a character makes a successful skill check, the following lore is revealed, including the information from lower DCs.

Knowledge (the Planes)

DC	Result
18	This is a solamith, a demon from the Infinite Layers of the Abyss. Stupid but tough, solamiths are, unlike other tanar'ri, immune to fire. They are susceptible to cold, even though they are resistant to minor amounts of cold damage.
23	A solamith can pound its foes with slams, but it normally attacks by tearing chunks out of its body and throwing them. Those fleshy bits explode into flames that can harm even those who are normally immune to fire.
28	A solamith's injuries knit closed at a remarkable rate. Magic weapons or good-aligned weapons work best against a solamith, but whenever it is injured in melee, it can emit a cone of its corrupt fire.

Environment: Solamiths can be found throughout the Infinite Layers of the Abyss, wandering as fierce hunters across the blasted landscape. Large numbers of solamiths, enslaved by more powerful demons, serve as artillery in armies or as sentries.

Typical Physical Characteristics: A solamith is an obese fiend that stands 10 feet tall and weighs up to a ton. Its horned head, set with burning eyes and full of flat teeth, seems to float on a pile of sagging skin. That skin is pale with bright green veins.

Alignment: Solamiths are animalistic and savage, except when they eat. Born of the Abyss, they are always chaotic evil.

Society

Solamiths don't have strong egos. They are content to prowl the Abyss, devouring other creatures instinctively and paying no heed to the suffering they cause. When in the presence of a more powerful demon or evil entity, a solamith fawns and snivels, hoping to be taken in as a pet or prized soldier.

Typical Treasure

Solamiths do not collect treasure. They have no need for the baubles coveted by others. However, a solamith's commander or master usually has more treasure because of the added success brought by having a solamith soldier.

For Player Characters

An evil spellcaster can summon a solamith using *summon monster VIII* or a higher-level *summon monster* spell. Treat the solamith as if it were on the 8th-level list on the Summon Monster table (*PH* 287).

Solamiths in Eberron

On the Battleground of Shavarath, solamiths form ragtag squads to lay waste to the angelic host—specifically archons. Under the watchful guidance of hezrou commanders, they have great success as mobile artillery. Particularly successful units tattoo their kills on their guts.

Solamiths in Faerûn

Solamiths are rare in the Abyss, offering little to the armies of the Blood War. The few solamiths to be found are usually in the employ of balors, and are used to do away with troublesome prisoners and to ward off attacks by extraplanar threats.

Illus. by J. Zhang

DEMONTHORN MANDRAKE

Thorny red stalks grow out of a cluster of crimson roots that twitch and shudder. Star-shaped leaves ring the plant around a large, spiny seedpod at its heart. Two bristly vines sprout from either side of this pod.

DEMONTHORN MANDRAKE **CR 5**
Always NE Large plant (extraplanar)
Init +4; **Senses** darkvision 60 ft., low-light vision, tremorsense 40 ft.; Listen +4, Spot +4
Languages —

AC 17, touch 9, flat-footed 17
(–1 size, +8 natural)
hp 52 (7 HD)
Immune plant immunities
Resist electricity 10, fire 10
Fort +8, **Ref** +2, **Will** +1

Speed 20 ft. (4 squares)
Melee 2 slams +8 each (2d6+4)
Space 10 ft.; **Reach** 10 ft.
Base Atk +5; **Grp** +13
Atk Options Power Attack
Special Actions spore pod, tangle root

Abilities Str 18, Dex 11, Con 16, Int 7, Wis 9, Cha 12
SA spore pod, tangle root
SQ plant traits
Feats Alertness, Improved Initiative, Power Attack
Skills Climb +12, Listen +4, Move Silently +4, Spot +4
Advancement 8–12 HD (Large); 13–21 HD (Huge)

Spore Pod (Ex) As a standard action, a demonthorn mandrake can spit a spore pod to a range of 30 feet. The pod then explodes in a 10-foot-radius burst. All living creatures in the area take 1d8 points of damage as thorny growths burst from their faces. At the start of each of the demonthorn mandrake's turns, these thorns continue to grow, dealing 5 points of damage.

Each affected opponent is allowed a DC 16 Fortitude save each round. If that save is successful, the thorns become brittle and fall off the creature's face. The thorns can also be pulled from a creature as a full-round action that deals 1d8 points of damage. Applying a vial of holy water to the thorns causes them to shrivel and die. The save DC is Constitution-based.

If a creature is already infested with spore pod thorns, it is immune to the damage and effect of this attack.

If a Medium or larger creature is killed by damage from a demonthorn mandrake's thorns, a fully grown demonthorn mandrake emerges from the corpse in 1d4 hours.

Tangle Root (Ex) A demonthorn mandrake can extend its roots to a radius of 30 feet as a standard action. At the start of the demonthorn mandrake's turn, opponents in the area must make a DC 16 Reflex save or be entangled. A mandrake can't move when its roots are extended, but can retract the roots as a free action. The save DC is Constitution-based.

When a mandrake's roots are extended, they scream with humanlike voices until retracted.

Demonthorn mandrakes are vile plant creatures that dwell on the Lower Planes. They are often brought to the Material Plane to serve as guardians or to start a plague.

STRATEGIES AND TACTICS

If used as a guardian, a demonthorn mandrake hides on a ceiling or wall, waiting for prey. Once combat begins, a demonthorn mandrake spits spore pods until all its enemies are infested with thorns, then it closes to engage in melee. In melee combat, a demonthorn mandrake uses its tangle root ability to prevent escape and thrashes opponents with slams.

In groups, demonthorn mandrakes fire spore pods to hit as many creatures as possible with little or no overlap. Then, groups of the plants single out enemies to attack, first targeting those who are suffering from spore pod thorns. Demonthorn mandrakes rarely retreat, having little sense of self-preservation.

SAMPLE ENCOUNTERS

Demonthorn mandrakes can be encountered alone or in groups ranging from two to an overwhelming horde. A demonthorn mandrake can be coaxed to work as part of a group with other creatures.

Glade of Corruption (EL 5): An area within a forest is said to be place of dark evil, littered with the remains of animals and haunted by angry tree spirits. In reality, a powerful wizard hid something valuable in a secret cave in the center of the woods. To guard the entrance, the wizard called a demonthorn mandrake from the Abyss. The wizard has not been back for many years, but the lone demonthorn mandrake still waits in the area surrounding the cave. The few who have encountered it have died before the spores could produce another demonthorn mandrake.

Creeping Doom (EL 10): Long ago, a doomsday cult brought a group of devils to the Material Plane. The devils and their cult were eventually destroyed, but a demonthorn mandrake brought by the devils was never found. Hidden away in a sealed chamber beneath the city, the plant laid dormant for years until a druid named Kalmirkas (NE male human druid 7) sensed and released it.

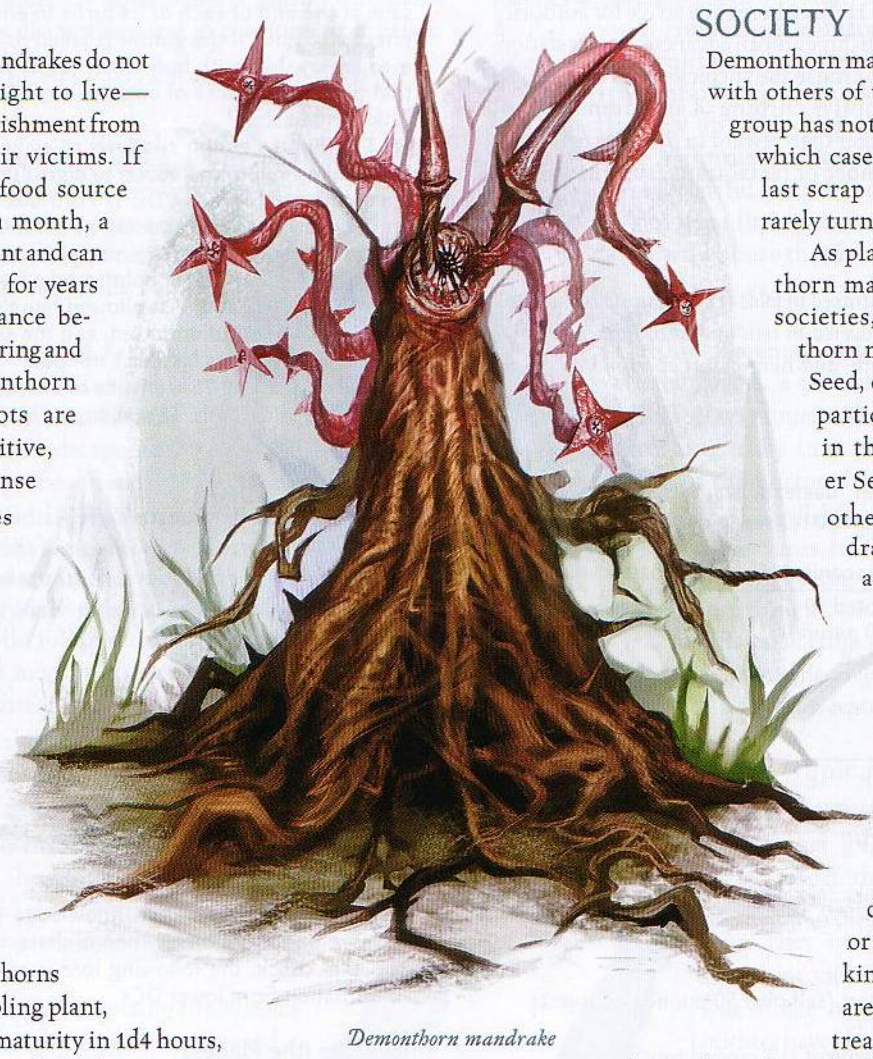
DEMONTHORN MANDRAKE LORE

Characters who have ranks in Knowledge (the palnes) can learn more about demonthorn mandrakes. When a character makes a successful skill check, the following lore is revealed, including the information from lower DCs.

Knowledge (the Planes)

DC	Result
15	This is a demonthorn mandrake, a plant from the Lower Planes. Its roots can hamper those who approach it.
20	A demonthorn mandrake can shoot a deadly pod filled with spores that cause living creatures struck by them to sprout thorns.
25	The only ways to stop the growth of a demonthorn mandrake's thorns are by pulling them out or dousing them in holy water.

Taking the plant as a sign of the rebirth of nature, the twisted druid has since kidnapped three victims to sacrifice to it, creating a new mandrake with each sacrifice. Now, four demonthorn mandrakes, led by the mad druid, prowl the sewers of the city. They hunt for more prey to increase their numbers before reaching their insidious vines to the surface.



Demonthorn mandrake

Illus. by M. Coimbra

ECOLOGY

Demonthorn mandrakes do not need water or light to live—they derive nourishment from the flesh of their victims. If starved of this food source for more than a month, a plant goes dormant and can continue to live for years without sustenance before finally withering and dying. A demonthorn mandrake's roots are extremely sensitive, allowing it to sense nearby creatures that are touching the ground even when it is dormant.

Demonthorn mandrakes reproduce by using other living creatures as hosts. Medium or larger victims slain by mandrake spore pod thorns play host to a sapling plant, which grows to maturity in 1d4 hours, consuming most of the host creature's blood and flesh to fuel the process.

Environment: Demonthorn mandrakes are most commonly found on the Lower Planes, including the Abyss, the Nine Hells, and Gehenna. In these places, demonthorn mandrakes congregate in large groups.

On the Material Plane, demonthorn mandrakes are found guarding a specific place, under the direct control of a conjurer who called them, or wandering about, free to do as they please. Uncontrolled mandrakes hide in secluded places such as sewers, caverns, or forest glades, waiting for unsuspecting victims to wander by.

Typical Physical Characteristics: An average demonthorn mandrake stands about 8 feet tall and weighs 300 pounds. When rooted in place and motionless, demonthorn mandrakes appear more like odd plants than creatures. When it is moving, a demonthorn mandrake's roots extend and retract at a rapid pace, pulling the body of the plant along.

Alignment: A demonthorn mandrake is neither chaotic nor lawful, but its connection to the Lower Planes makes it absolutely evil.

SOCIETY

Demonthorn mandrakes get along well with others of their kind unless the group has not fed for some time, in which case they fight over every last scrap of food. Such battles rarely turn deadly.

As plant creatures, demonthorn mandrakes do not form societies, but a great demonthorn mandrake, the Mother Seed, exists somewhere in a particularly verdant locale in the Abyss. This Mother Seed is larger than any other demonthorn mandrake, and it possesses a cruel and cunning intellect. It is an authority that other demonthorn mandrakes obey without hesitation.

TYPICAL TREASURE

Demonthorn mandrakes do not use gear or magic items of any kind, so wandering plants are rarely found with any treasure. Most, however, have a lair where the bones of their victims lie. Scattered among these remains, any manner of treasure might be found, so demonthorn mandrakes in their lairs have standard treasure for their Challenge Rating.

DEMONTHORN MANDRAKES IN EBERRON

Demonthorn mandrakes can be found on the planes of Lamannia and Shavarath. On the Material Plane, demonthorn mandrakes are most often encountered in the Demon Wastes, wandering the Labyrinth. Explorers in the deepest regions of Xen'drik have also reported encountering demonthorn mandrakes, some in the service of a particularly vicious cult of giants said to be in league with demons.

DEVIL

Devils are creatures of law and evil, native to the Nine Hells of Baator. They inflict misery on mortals and other creatures through wicked schemes and convoluted ploys for power.

Baatezu are the predominant race (and subtype) among devils. Fiends that belong to the baatezu race are also part of a rigid hierarchy in the Hells, where they strive for authority and influence. Accomplishments can advance a devil's station, but such deeds can also arouse the suspicion and ire of those higher in rank. Preemptive curbing of ambition through violence can come quicker than reward in the infernal realm. Baatezu possess a number of racial traits, summarized in the glossary.

GULTHIR

Like a towering skeleton draped in folds of ruddy skin, this creature has a bald, warty head covered in lesions and tumors. An oozing wound serves as its mouth, and twin points of crimson light are its eyes.

GULTHIR — CR 6

Always LE Large outsider (baatezu, evil, extraplanar, lawful)
Init +6; **Senses** darkvision 60 ft., see in darkness; Listen +11, Spot +11
Languages Celestial, Draconic, Infernal; telepathy 100 ft.

AC 21, touch 11, flat-footed 19
(–1 size, +2 Dex, +10 natural)
hp 51 (6 HD); **DR** 10/good
Immune fire, poison
Resist acid 10, cold 10
Fort +9, **Ref** +7, **Will** +9

Speed 20 ft. (4 squares)
Melee bite +10 (2d6+6)
Space 10 ft.; **Reach** 10 ft.
Base Atk +6; **Grp** +14
Atk Options aligned strike (evil, lawful), improved grab
Special Actions ingest evil, *summon baatezu*, swallow of domination
Spell-Like Abilities (CL 6th):
At will—*greater teleport* (self plus 50 pounds of objects only), *see invisibility*
5/day—*ray of enfeeblement* (+8 ranged touch), *scare* (DC 16)

Abilities Str 19, Dex 14, Con 19, Int 8, Wis 15, Cha 18
SA aligned strike, improved grab, ingest evil, spell-like abilities, *summon baatezu*, swallow of domination
Feats Improved Initiative, Iron Will, Weapon Focus (bite)
Skills Hide +7, Intimidate +13, Knowledge (the planes) +8, Listen +11, Move Silently +11, Spot +11, Survival +11 (+13 on other planes)
Advancement 7–12 HD (Large); 13–18 HD (Huge)

Improved Grab (Ex) To use this ability, a gulthir must hit an opponent of its size or smaller with a bite. It can then attempt to start a grapple as a free action without provoking attacks of opportunity.

Swallow of Domination (Ex) A gulthir can swallow a grabbed opponent smaller than itself by making a successful grapple check.

A gulthir's gizzard can hold one creature at a time. A foe swallowed by a gulthir is immediately affected as if by a *dominate monster* spell (CL 17th, no save). A gulthir can take a full-round action to spew a swallowed opponent into an adjacent unoccupied square.

The disgorged foe is covered in slime, and as long as that opponent is controlled by the gulthir, its eyes are coated with an even thicker layer of white slime. Once disgorged, a *dominated* foe can attempt a DC 17 Will save at the end of each of its turns to end the effect. The effect also ends if the gulthir is killed or if the victim's eyes are washed with holy water (a full-round action that provokes attacks of opportunity). The save DC is Charisma-based.

Ingest Evil (Su) If a gulthir swallows an evil outsider, it can take a full-round action to digest that fiend. If a swallowed foe fails a DC 17 Fortitude save, it is immediately destroyed, adding its essence to the gulthir. The gulthir gains temporary hit points equal to that outsider's full normal hit points and a bonus on saving throws equal to half the swallowed fiend's Hit Dice. The save DC is Constitution-based, and the save bonus and temporary hit points last for 1 minute.

Summon Baatezu (Sp) 75% chance to summon 1d4 lemures; 1/day; caster level 6th. This ability is the equivalent of a 3rd-level spell.

Devils who fail their masters are, if not slain outright, transformed into wretched shadows of their former selves. Among the new forms a devil might take is the gulthir. These unclean devils continue to serve their displeased masters as methods of punishment for other lesser devils, because their gullets are certain doom for baatezu that are swallowed. Such creatures are destroyed or become gulthirs themselves.

GULTHIR LORE

Characters who have ranks in Knowledge (the planes) can learn more about gulthirs. When a character makes a successful skill check, the following lore is revealed, including the information from lower DCs.

Knowledge (the Planes)

DC	Result
16	This creature is a gulthir, a fiend from the Nine Hells of Baator. In battle, gulthirs bite and swallow their foes.
21	A gulthir can mentally control those it swallows, spitting them out into a fight. This result reveals the nature of the slime covering a dominated creature's eyes, and the ways to remove it. Gulthirs are vulnerable to good-aligned weapons.
26	Gulthirs can summon lemures to aid them. If a gulthir swallows another devil, including a lemure, it can add that devil's power to its own. It can instead slowly digest a devil, transforming it into another gulthir.

Strategies and Tactics

A gulthir has lost so much that it has little fear, so it charges into battle recklessly, chooses an enemy, and tries to swallow that opponent as soon as possible. It zaps strong foes with *ray of enfeeblement*, hoping to weaken those opponents for when it comes time to grapple and swallow them. It uses *scare* to scatter its enemies so it can focus on its chosen target. If faced with numerous adversaries, a gulthir summons lemures to act as distractions and to consume to enhance its own abilities.

Sample Encounter

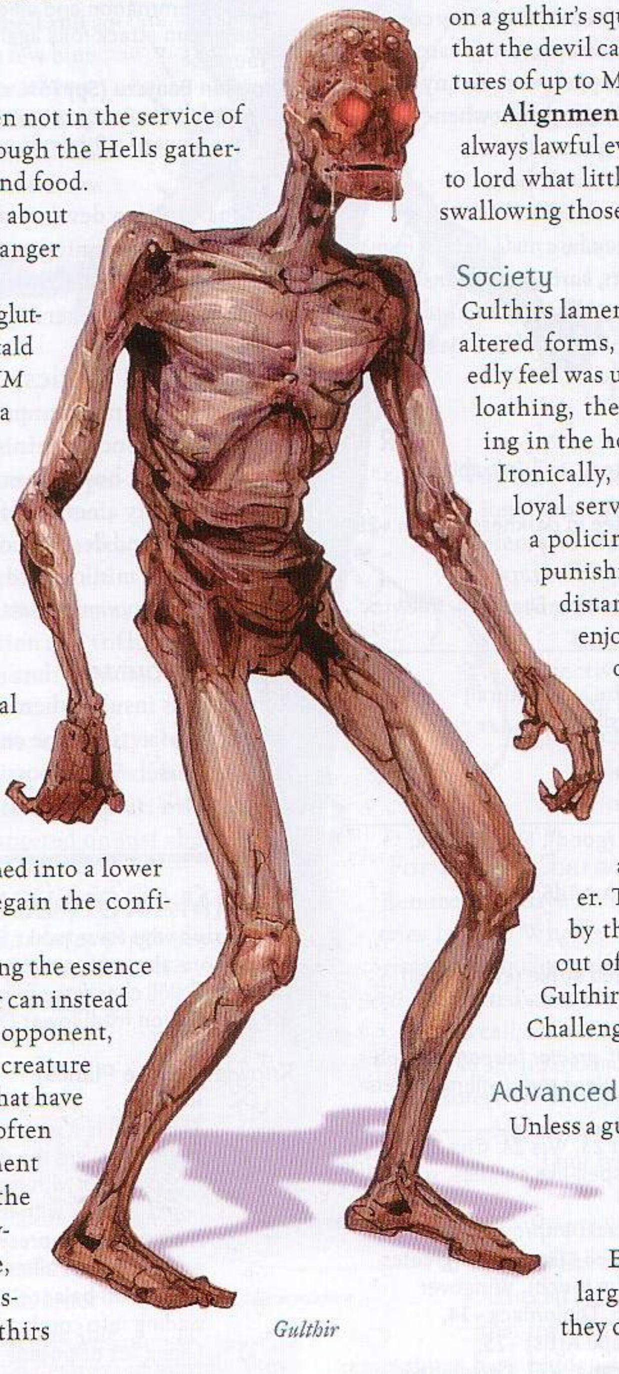
Gulthirs are pariahs, and when not in the service of a greater devil, they stalk through the Hells gathering packs of lemures as pets and food. The lemures mindlessly mill about the gulthir, unaware of the danger they face.

Gublestald's Gang (EL 7): A gluttonous gulthir named Gublestald and his gang of four lemures (*MM* 57) haunt the fetid landscape of a corrupted swamp. These fiends serve a lich that lives in a sinking tower in the swamp's interior, but they are free to harry anyone they find in the lich's domain.

Ecology

Gulthirs are outside the normal order of fiends that populate the Nine Hells. Formed from those devils that have raised the ire of their infernal masters, they are transformed into a lower form until they somehow regain the confidence of the baatezu.

Instead of instantly ingesting the essence of a swallowed fiend, a gulthir can instead slowly digest the swallowed opponent, a process that transforms the creature into another gulthir. Devils that have displeased their masters are often fed to gulthirs, as punishment as well as a way to maintain the gulthir population. Displaying a small amount of pride, gulthirs never willingly transform lesser fiends into gulthirs this way.



Gulthir

Illus. by C. Critchlow

A newly created gulthir is shattered by its transformation, experiencing waves of pain as its body acclimates to its new form. From the moment it reawakens, it knows its function and all its abilities, and it sets out to regain its master's favor.

Environment: Gulthirs are native to the Nine Hells of Baator. They infest all the layers but are common on Dis, the second layer, where Dispater, the Iron Duke, dispenses his paranoid brand of justice.

Typical Physical Characteristics: A gulthir stands 10 feet tall and weighs about 800 pounds. Its sallow skin hangs loosely from its skeletal frame. The loose mouth on a gulthir's square head lies over a hinged jaw that the devil can unlock to accommodate creatures of up to Medium size.

Alignment: Like all baatezu, gulthirs are always lawful evil. They take every opportunity to lord what little power they have over others, swallowing those that don't bow down.

Society

Gulthirs lament their fate. They despise their altered forms, a punishment they undoubtedly feel was unjust. To vent their hatred and loathing, they turn on other devils, reveling in the horror that their abilities elicit. Ironically, gulthirs are among the most loyal servants in the Hells, acting like a policing force as well as a method of punishment. Other devils keep their distance from gulthirs, letting them enjoy the diversion of wreaking havoc on lesser fiends.

Typical Treasure

Treasure is a symbol of status that gulthirs cling to. They adorn themselves with jewels, and they covet items of power. They swallow valuables carried by their victims to keep such items out of the hands of potential rivals. Gulthirs have standard treasure for their Challenge Rating.

Advanced Gulthirs

Unless a gulthir somehow regains the favor of the devil that caused its demotion, it is condemned to spend eternity in its present form. Exceptionally old gulthirs are far larger than their counterparts, and they can consume larger creatures.

For Player Characters

An evil spellcaster can summon a gulthir using *summon monster* VI or a higher-level *summon monster* spell. Treat the gulthir as if it were on the 6th-level list on the Summon Monster table (PH 287).

Gulthirs in Faerûn

Gulthirs are all too common on the wasted battlefields of the Blood Rift, where they serve as commissars and expendable shock troops. Pit fiends sometimes dispatch squads of gulthirs into the wilds of the Rift to hunt weaker yugoloths and turn them into gulthirs, thereby bolstering the devil army without resorting to the mercenary contracts yugoloths (*MM2* 202) prefer. Of course, the greater devils deny that these gulthir "press gangs" work in any official capacity. Regardless, yugoloths slay gulthirs whenever they can get away with doing so.

REMMANON

Hovering just a few feet above the ground is a nude, hairless human-like creature. It is genderless. Hooks, barbs, and chains decorate its flesh, and long horns curl from each side of its head, the two meeting just below the creature's chin. Solid black eyes stare out from its unreadable face.

REMMANON **CR 15**

Always LE Medium outsider (baatezu, evil, extraplanar, lawful)
Init +8; **Senses** darkvision 60 ft., see in darkness; Listen +28, Spot +28
Aura insidious (30 ft.)
Languages Abyssal, Celestial, Common, Draconic, Infernal; telepathy 100 ft.

AC 32, touch 18, flat-footed 28
(+4 Dex, +2 shield, +4 deflection, +12 natural)
hp 153 (18 HD); **DR** 15/good and silver
Immune fire, poison
Resist acid 10, cold 10; **SR** 25
Fort +15, **Ref** +15, **Will** +18

Speed 30 ft. (6 squares), fly 30 ft. (good); Flyby Attack, Wingover
Melee hellfire touch +23 (2d6+4 plus 1d6 fire)
Space 5 ft.; **Reach** 5 ft.
Base Atk +18; **Grp** +22
Atk Options Improved Feint, aligned strike (evil, lawful)
Special Actions *summon baatezu*
Spell-Like Abilities (CL 18th):
At will—*detect good, disguise self, greater teleport* (self plus 50 pounds of objects only), *plane shift* (willing targets only)

Abilities Str 18, Dex 19, Con 18, Int 23, Wis 24, Cha 25
SA aligned strike, insidious aura, spell-like abilities, *summon baatezu*
Feats Combat Expertise, Flyby Attack, Improved Feint, Improved Initiative, Quicken Spell-Like Ability (*greater teleport*), Weapon Focus (hellfire touch), Wingover
Skills Bluff +28, Concentration +25, Diplomacy +34, Disguise +28 (+30 acting), Escape Artist +25, Intimidate +30, Knowledge (arcana) +27, Knowledge (history) +27, Knowledge (nobility and royalty) +27, Knowledge (the planes) +27, Listen +28, Search +27, Sense Motive +28, Spot +28, Survival +7 (+9 on other planes, following tracks), Use Rope +4 (+6 bindings)
Advancement 19–36 HD (Medium)
Possessions *ring of force shield, ring of protection +4*

Insidious Aura (Su) A remmanon emanates a telepathic aura that plays on the doubts and fears of its foes. Opponents that begin their turn within 30 feet of a remmanon must succeed on a DC 26 Will save or suffer the effect of a *confusion* spell for that round. An affected foe never treats a remmanon as the nearest creature for the purpose of determining the *confusion* effect. The save DC is Charisma-based.

A remmanon and allies within 30 feet of it gain a +4 bonus on attack rolls against opponents affected by this aura.

Summon Baatezu (Sp) 75% chance to summon 1d3 bearded devils; 2/day; caster level 18th. This ability is the equivalent of a 9th-level spell.

Remmanons are devils that sow discord and distrust in mortals. Using cunning words, magical manipulation, and servitors loyal to them, they can bring down the strongest of fortifications by weakening them from the inside.

Strategies and Tactics

A remmanon is rarely unprotected and enjoys the support of mortal or fiendish minions, depending on where it is encountered. It hovers over the battlefield, causing doubt and uncertainty among its foes while commanding its servants to rend and destroy confused enemies. If at any time a remmanon's minions are overwhelmed, it adds to their numbers with *summon baatezu*.

Sample Encounter

Remmanons insulate themselves with minions, using cultists on the Material Plane or lesser fiends when in the Nine Hells of Baator. When possible, they keep the company of

REMMANON LORE

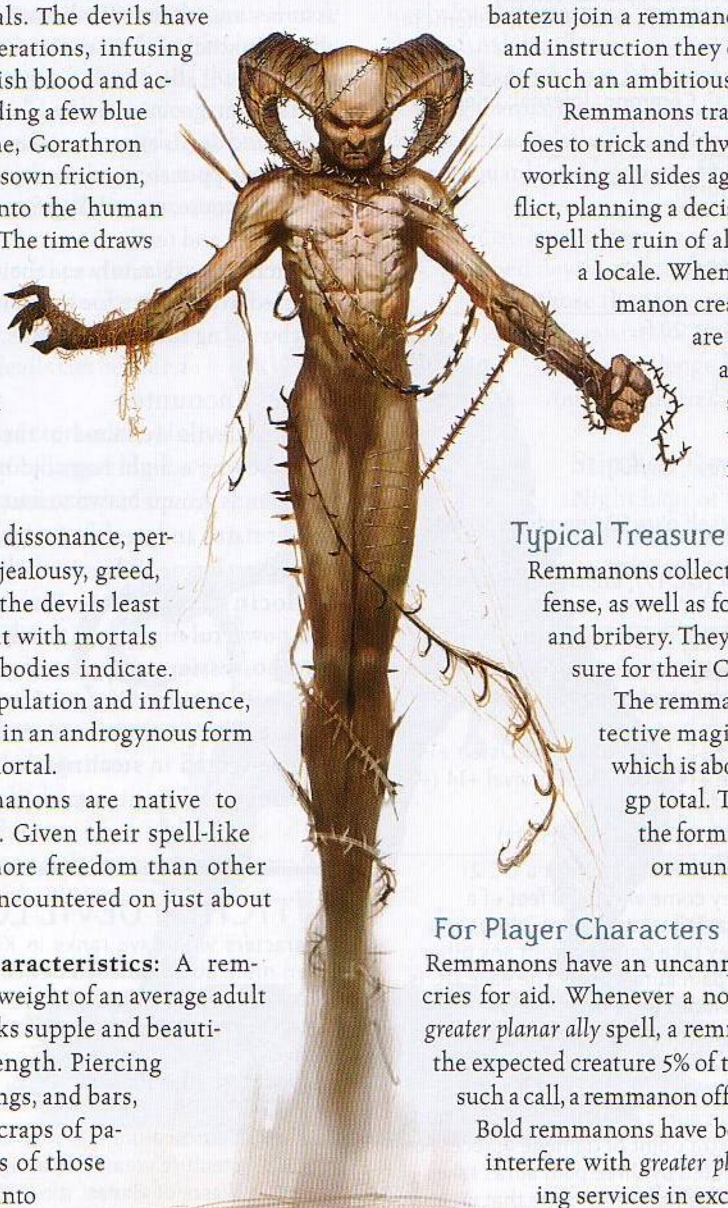
Characters who have ranks in Knowledge (the planes) can learn more about remmanons. When a character makes a successful skill check, the following lore is revealed, including the information from lower DCs.

Knowledge (the Planes)

DC	Result
25	This devil is a remmanon, a fiend from the Nine Hells. They are the devils of discord, which make bloody deals with mortals. A remmanon's touch burns victims with hellfire.
30	A remmanon's presence can befuddle its enemies and bolster its allies. It uses minions to keep its foes off balance in battle, but it doesn't fear wading into combat.
35	Like a lot of potent fiends, a remmanon has skin that can turn aside a stout blade, and only good-aligned weapons treated with alchemical silver can easily wound it. It is also highly resistant to spells.

erinyes and other devils that have capabilities complementing their own.

Against the Middle (EL 15 or higher): Gorathron came to the Material Plane with six erinyes (*MM* 54) and quickly united several tribes of goblinoids deep in a vast mountain range. The goblinoids named the fiend their god, built it a mountaintop fortress, and accepted Gorathron's erinyes soldiers as generals. The devils have bided their time for generations, infusing their followers with fiendish blood and acquiring other allies, including a few blue dragons. At the same time, Gorathron and its other minions have sown friction, iniquity, and weakness into the human kingdoms of nearby lands. The time draws near for the remmanon's chosen people to invade those fractious realms, where no alliance can possibly emerge to stand in their way.



Remmanon

Ecology

Remmanons are fiends of dissonance, personifying the qualities of jealousy, greed, and lust. They are among the devils least likely to engage in combat with mortals or other fiends, as their bodies indicate. Instead, they prefer manipulation and influence, their bodily might hidden in an androgynous form that appears deceptively mortal.

Environment: Remmanons are native to the Nine Hells of Baator. Given their spell-like abilities, they have far more freedom than other fiends, and they can be encountered on just about any plane.

Typical Physical Characteristics: A remmanon has the height and weight of an average adult human male. Its body looks supple and beautiful, but seems to lack strength. Piercing its flesh are iron hooks, rings, and bars, from which hang small scraps of paper containing the names of those mortals who have entered into contracts with it.

Alignment: Remmanons are crafty, patient, and farsighted. They worm their way into agreements with mortals, exploiting the letter of such contracts when they come due. Enjoying taking advantage of and destroying mortals, remmanons never hesitate to harm or pervert those they can. These fiends are always lawful evil.

Society

Even when compared to other baatezu, remmanons are arrogant. They believe they cannot fail, and that they personify the greatest aspects of their wicked race. Few lesser devils appreciate the subtleties of seduction and manipulation, and remmanons are quick to point out that failing in their lessers. Remmanons command respect, however, and lesser baatezu join a remmanon for the potential profit and instruction they can receive as the lackeys of such an ambitious devil.

Remmanons travel the planes looking for foes to trick and thwart. They take their time, working all sides against the others in a conflict, planning a decisive blow at some point to spell the ruin of all that is good and holy in a locale. When no conflicts exist, a remmanon creates them. Its only desires are the downfall of goodness and purity, along with the subjugation of the weak under the iron fist of terrible evil.

Typical Treasure

Remmanons collect valuables for personal defense, as well as for the sake of appearances and bribery. They have triple standard treasure for their Challenge Rating.

The remmanon in this entry has protective magic items worth 40,500 gp, which is about two-thirds of its 66,000 gp total. The rest of its wealth is in the form of coinage and art objects, or mundane jewelry.

For Player Characters

Remmanons have an uncanny ability to hear magical cries for aid. Whenever a nongood spellcaster casts a *greater planar ally* spell, a remmanon appears instead of the expected creature 5% of the time. When it answers such a call, a remmanon offers a contract to the caster. Bold remmanons have been known to voluntarily interfere with *greater planar binding* spells, offering services in exchange for a contract even if not trapped by the calling.

Remmanons in Eberron

In Eberron, remmanons are native to the Material Plane. Rare descendants of the quori that invaded Xen'drik some 40,000 years ago, remmanons have hidden themselves throughout the shattered continent, working their wickedness on the drow and giants of that land. A few have spread to other realms, including Khorvaire, where they infect the dragonmarked races with corruption.

Illus. by R. Spears

STITCHED DEVIL

Creeping forward is a tortured patchwork creature, its fiendish body a knot of devilish arms, legs, and faces held together by sinewy thread.

STITCHED DEVIL CR 9

Always LE Large outsider (evil, extraplanar, lawful)
Init +2; **Senses** darkvision 60 ft., see in darkness; Listen +14, Spot +14
Aura pain (30 ft.)
Languages Abyssal, Celestial, Common, Infernal; telepathy 100 ft.

AC 27, touch 11, flat-footed 25
(–1 size, +2 Dex, +16 natural)
hp 84 (8 HD); **DR** 10/good
Immune fire, poison
Resist acid 10, cold 10; **SR** 19
Fort +12, **Ref** +10, **Will** +9

Speed 30 ft. (6 squares), climb 20 ft.
Melee bite +14 (1d8+7) and
4 claws +12 each (1d6+3)
Space 10 ft.; **Reach** 10 ft.
Base Atk +8; **Grp** +19
Atk Options aligned strike (evil, lawful)
Spell-Like Abilities (CL 8th):
At will—*greater teleport* (self plus 50 pounds of objects only)
1/day—*phantasmal killer* (DC 17), *dispel magic, unholy blight* (DC 17)

Abilities Str 24, Dex 15, Con 22, Int 7, Wis 17, Cha 17
SA aligned strike, pain aura, spell-like abilities
Feats Ability Focus (pain aura), Lightning Reflexes, Multiattack, Track^B
Skills Climb +15, Diplomacy +5, Intimidate +14, Listen +14, Search +9, Sense Motive +14, Spot +14, Survival +14 (+16 following tracks)
Advancement 9–16 HD (Large); 17–24 HD (Huge)

Pain Aura (Su) Living creatures must attempt a DC 21 Fortitude save when they come within 30 feet of a stitched devil. Those that fail take an extra 1d6 points of damage whenever they take damage from any other source while within the pain aura's area. The save DC is Charisma-based and includes a +2 racial bonus.

When a creature that is affected by multiple pain auras would take extra damage from the auras, it takes an extra 1d6 points of damage from one of the auras affecting it. All other pain auras affecting that creature cause it to take only 1 extra point of damage apiece. For example, a creature affected by three pain auras takes an extra 1d6+2 points of damage each time that creature takes damage from any other source.

A creature that successfully saves cannot be affected again by that same stitched devil's pain aura for 24 hours. Night hags and lawful evil outsiders are immune to this aura.

Skills Stitched devils have a +8 racial bonus on Climb checks. A stitched devil can choose to take 10 on Climb checks, even if rushed or threatened.

Night hags that know the proper techniques gather the parts of slain devils and sew them together to create stitched devils. These fiends are tormented beyond what is normal for their kind, imprisoned by their agony and the will of their makers.

Strategies and Tactics

A stitched devil first uses *phantasmal killer* on the creature that looks strongest among its enemies. It then rushes into melee, heedless of its own safety. If amid combatants it assumes are not evil—a distinction it might not be correct about—a stitched devil uses *unholy blight,* unconcerned with catching evil allies within the area. It uses *greater teleport* to gain advantageous positions during a battle.

Stitched devils encountered in a group use *greater teleport* to surround opponents and overlap their auras. Thereafter, they close the noose, scrambling forward to shred their enemies with claws and teeth.

Stitched devils rarely use their *dispel magic* ability unless directed to do so or a foe has obvious magical defenses that are thwarting the devil's attacks.

Sample Encounter

Stitched devils are found in the company of night hags or abroad doing a night hag's bidding. A particular night hag commands groups of two to four stitched devils, depending on her status and wealth. A night hag purchases devil flesh by trading larvae and petitioners to the baatezu.

Elocin's Pets (EL 13): Elocin, a particularly ambitious and powerful night hag (12 HD; *MM* 193)), recently came into possession of a pair of petitioners bound for the Heroic Domains of Ysgard. Elocin traded these creatures, despite their protests, to an amnizu (*Fiendish Codex II* 112) that delighted in stealing souls that deserved better. In exchange, the amnizu gave Elocin a substantial amount

STITCHED DEVIL LORE

Characters who have ranks in Knowledge (the planes) can learn more about stitched devils. When a character makes a successful skill check, the following lore is revealed, including the information from lower DCs.

Knowledge (the Planes)

DC	Result
19	This creature is a stitched devil, a wretched creature created by a night hag from the Gray Waste of Hades. It is not a baatezu, but it shares traits and resiliencies with that hateful race. Its multiple limbs allow it to attack quickly and fiercely.
24	Stitched devils emit waves of pain that cause those injured in its presence to suffer more intensely. They can transport themselves great distances in an instant.
29	Despite its dull intellect, a stitched devil has command of spell-like abilities that can scare foes to death or call a greasy cloud of unholy energy to harm non-evil foes in an area. Good-aligned weapons can pierce its hide effectively.

of devil flesh. The night hag stitched the parts together to form a pair of stitched devils to guard her and carry out her will. She can be found in Sigil (*Manual of the Planes* 151), brokering for more petitioners in the shadowy alleys of that city.

Ecology

Devils are part of the cosmic order, if outside natural ecology, but stitched devils are apart even from the hierarchy of the infernal realms. Sewn together from the pieces of dismembered fiends, stitched devils live in constant misery. Though they are, in a sense, constructed, as soon as they are pieced together they fuse into their distinctive forms, becoming new creatures with their own personalities, motives, and pain.

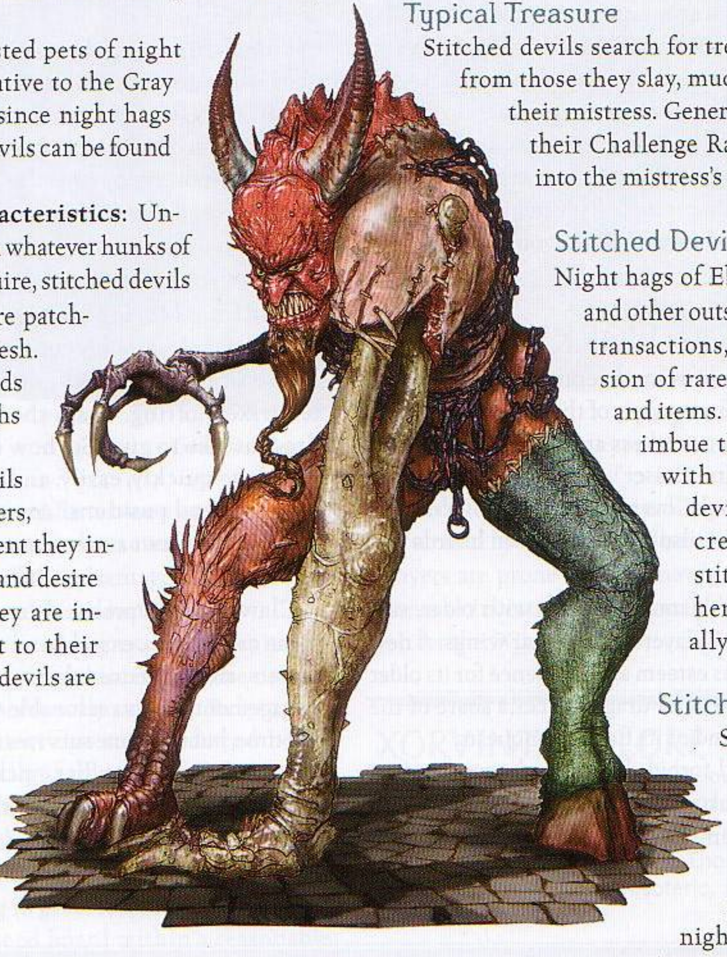
Environment: The twisted pets of night hags, stitched devils are native to the Gray Waste of Hades. However, since night hags prowl the planes, stitched devils can be found just about anywhere.

Typical Physical Characteristics: Ungainly fiends assembled from whatever hunks of flesh the night hags can acquire, stitched devils never look the same. All are patchwork creatures of fiendish flesh. A typical stitched devil stands just over 10 feet tall. It weighs about 800 pounds.

Alignment: Stitched devils channel their pain into others, cackling madly at the torment they inflict. Despite their tendency and desire to hurt other creatures, they are intensely loyal and obedient to their night hag creators. Stitched devils are always lawful evil.

Society

When a devil fails and is destroyed, its essence is reabsorbed into the plane to be spawned anew in the belching vats of Hell's breeding pits. This is the way the process is supposed to work, but the baatezu are famous for bending the rules to advance their status in the rigid hierarchy of their dreadful home. Kocrachons (*Book of Vile Darkness* 175) are particularly noted for selling parts of their victims in exchange for valuable larvae and lost souls, which they then use to procure more interesting subjects. Stitched devils are therefore abominations in the eyes of the baatezu.



Stitched devil

Illus. by A. Swekel

From the moment they awaken, stitched devils bear the agony of the disjointed parts that make them up, as well as the sinew piercing their hides. These crafted devils have every reason to despise their makers, but they don't know that they should, so they simper and whine to their night hag mistress for affection and mercy. Stitched devils nurture the vain hope of somehow escaping their lowly lot and attaining importance, freedom, or—failing that—final death.

Night hags whisper false promises of relief to their pets, goading them to commit audacious acts of villainy. The hags dispatch their stitched devils for all sorts of purposes, using them as guards and hunters, soldiers and gladiators.

Typical Treasure

Stitched devils search for treasure, taking valuables from those they slay, much of which they give to their mistress. Generate standard treasure for their Challenge Rating, but put most of it into the mistress's hoard.

Stitched Devils in Eberron

Night hags of Eberron deal with fiends and other outsiders, and through their transactions, they come into possession of rare and unusual materials and items. Some hags know how to imbue the body parts of fiends with life, creating stitched devils or "hag dolls." These creatures resemble the stitched devil presented here, except they are usually lawful neutral.

Stitched Devils in Faerûn

Stitched devils in Faerûn are typical for their kind. A Red Wizard named Alabrast Rue stole the technique for making them from a night hag he imprisoned and subsequently slew. By trading the formula with other night hags in exchange for a steady stream of extraplanar reagents, Alabrast has managed to create six of these fiends. The devils serve as protectors of his hidden redoubt in the city of Sefriszar, where Alabrast harbors ambitions of becoming Delhumide's next tharcion.

DRAGONS OF THE GREAT GAME

A few dragons, young and old, devote their lives to a competition called *xorvintaal*, the "great game." They scheme against their fellows, wagering their hoards and manipulating their minions like chess pieces. Sometimes those that don't directly serve a dragon find themselves caught up in the game.

Dragons choose to take up *xorvintaal* when they're young adults, drawn by the allure of besting their fellow dragons and the promise of vast treasure. But the great game demands commitment from its players. Dragons are proud and solitary creatures, so *xorvintaal* is one of the few ways a dragon can earn draconic prestige. Masters of *xorvintaal* are regarded as the finest minds among dragonkind.

To join the great game, a dragon must first research and perform the Ritual of *Xorvintaal*. The ritual requires the dragon to spend a month meditating in a magic cocoon. When the dragon emerges, it is forever marked as a dragon of the great game, having sacrificed its innate spellcasting ability for the ability to manipulate its minions, to interact telepathically with other *xorvintaal* dragons, and to gain power as it advances in the great game.

HOW XORVINTAAL WORKS

Xorvintaal takes years to learn and centuries to play. Only dragons understand the finer points of the rules. At its heart, *xorvintaal* is a combination of chess and poker, played with the world as the board and "lesser" creatures as the pieces. Dragons use lackeys to take over one another's territories and hoards, but they must also place their own hoards and lairs at risk.

Xorvintaal has a feudal element as well, with older, successful players taking new players under their wings. A new player that does well earns esteem and influence for its older draconic patrons, and the older dragon earns a share of the younger dragon's hoard and of its future conquests.

The rules of *xorvintaal* forbid dragon-to-dragon conflict except under rare circumstances. Most players act subtly to divert attention from themselves, avoiding the direct ire of other players.

Because they join the great game through a transformative ritual, *xorvintaal* dragons are incapable of breaking the rules, but they have potent minions and the unusual abilities granted by the Ritual of *Xorvintaal*. They manipulate adventurers and other creatures to raid the lairs of their opponents. These pieces in the great game draw attention to themselves rather than to their manipulator. After a successful move, such pieces might find themselves the target of a more powerful *xorvintaal* dragon that had a stake in the defeated dragon's treasure and winnings.

The exact scoring and rules of engagement are not as important as the effects that you, as DM, want *xorvintaal* to have on your ongoing campaign. In most cases, the mechanics of the great game can be portrayed as beyond the knowledge of the PCs.

Those characters who manage to penetrate the mystery should receive evocative but garbled blends of maneuvers and strategy from any game you know well enough to speak eloquently about. Consistency and clarity should be your last priority—portray *xorvintaal* as a tortured mess of contradictory rules and exceptions that only a dragon with centuries to study could understand. Some ideas for PC-relevant moves for any *xorvintaal* dragon follow.

Castling: Moving a *xorvintaal* dragon's personal hoard should be an incredibly complex maneuver, requiring years of preparation and multiple levels of fail-safe and counterstrike plotting. That's the impression some *xorvintaal* dragons like to give. So, how do a few players move their hoards so quickly, easily, and regularly? Are they moving into prepared positions? Are their networks of *xorvintaal* resources laid out across the world in a way that few if any rivals can see?

Claw Test: On precise dates that only players of the great game can fathom, exarchs and unwitting agents of different players are maneuvered into prearranged locations. The engagement seems reasonable to each of the combatants at the time, but if anyone survives to investigate the true causes, the origins of the conflict quickly grow murky. Apparently, the winning player in these small contests is the player whose agents are deemed to have accomplished the most while possessing the fewest resources or least power.

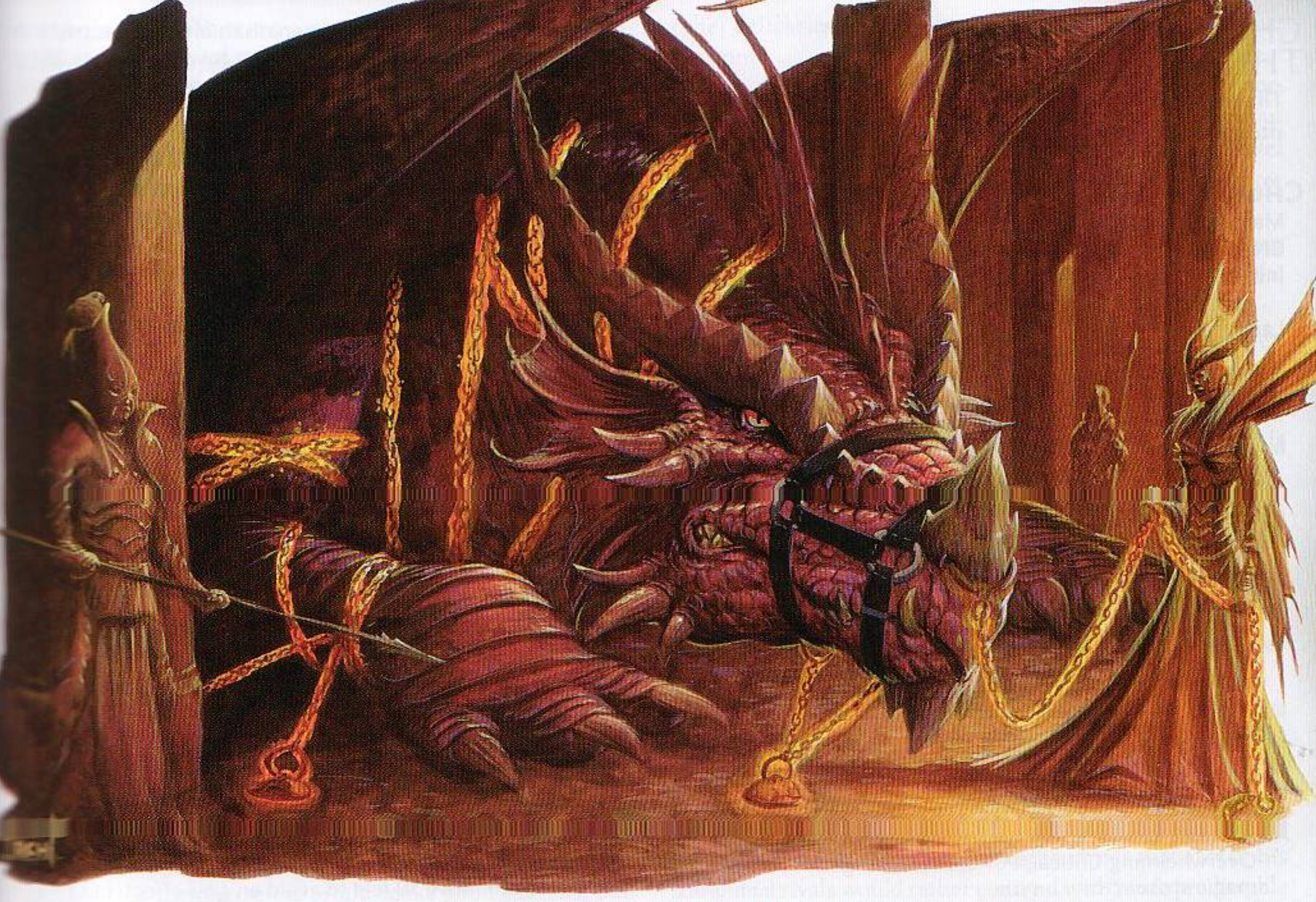
BEHIND THE CURTAIN: WHY XORVINTAAL?

Applying the *xorvintaal* template to a dragon is essentially trading away spellcasting for a few supernatural abilities, most of which make the dragon a better climactic encounter. Because the *xorvintaal* template improves classic dragon abilities such as breath weapons and melee attacks, it makes dragons act more like dragons and less like mighty sorcerers who happen to be dragons.

Handling a dragon's breath weapon, array of melee attacks, and special abilities is enough work for a DM. By eliminating spellcasting, *xorvintaal* abilities remove a level of complexity. The *xorvintaal* abilities are powerful enough to make the template a power-neutral choice.

Some of the *xorvintaal* abilities have specific triggers or timing associated with them. Some make the dragon seem more active in combat, improving the feel of the encounter. Others reward characters who notice that the dragon roars before it breathes.

The story behind the *xorvintaal* template is an excuse to populate a dragon's lair with all sorts of interesting monsters and NPCs—the dragon's exarchs. Encounter design is easier if the dragon has a loyal exarch that handles spellcasting for it. Design a dedicated spellcaster for the task, leaving the dragon free to breathe fire and bite victims in half.



Xorvintaal has clear winners and losers

Illus. by R. Horsley

Survivors of such arranged conflicts have a way of growing into positions of power that make them even better exarchs than agents who start with all the advantages. Would-be PC exarchs are sure to be involved in a claw test.

Seed Hoard: One of the most aggressive moves in *xorvintaal* is establishing a new hoard in an area the dragon player doesn't intend to personally occupy. Relying on exarchs and pawns to protect this so-called seed hoard earns high points, especially if the seed hoard is near a rival player's personal hoard. Moving a seed hoard within the 10-mile radius in which a *xorvintaal* dragon can communicate telepathically with its own exarchs (see page 47) is a bold maneuver, leading to great losses if the rival can't locate and eliminate the seed hoard within a reasonable amount of time.

In the PCs' lives, a seed hoard creates an odd situation in which a dragon's hoard seems to be defended by everything but the dragon.

Seed Sham: Some seed hoards are bluffs. Instead of consisting of an actual hoard, they are mixtures of bizarre traps and threats designed to cut away at the rival dragon's resources. Such trickery might be why *xorvintaal* dragons seem reluctant or unable to move directly to investigate curious happenings near their territory.

The best and highest-scoring seed shams are played in such a fashion that the target of the bluff should be able to figure out that the supposed seed hoard might be a bluff, using all the rules of the game. But calling a bluff that turns out to be a true seed hoard can have disastrous consequences, so lesser players are prone to using newly acquired and expendable assets to investigate questionable seeds. That sounds like a job for the PCs.

XORVINTAAL LORE

Characters who have ranks in Knowledge (arcana) can learn more about xorvintaal. When a character makes a successful skill check, the following lore is revealed, including the information from lower DCs. Though the specific rules of the game are incredibly esoteric, its general principles are understood.

Knowledge (Arcana)

DC	Result
20	*Xorvintaal* is the great game that dragons play, trying to steal each other's treasure.
25	Some dragons play *xorvintaal,* wagering their hoards against each other. It's essentially a struggle over territory, played out with humanoids and monsters as the game pieces.
30	Dragons that play *xorvintaal* can perform a ritual that grants other creatures extra power in exchange for helping the dragon in the great game.
35	*Xorvintaal* has a feudal element to it, with younger players doing the bidding of older dragons in exchange for protection and assistance.

CHORRANATHAU THE INSCRUTABLE

This immense dark dragon is covered in sharp spikes and has oversized fangs. It moves with a sinuous grace as it stalks toward you.

CHORRANATHAU THE INSCRUTABLE CR 18

Male ancient fang dragon
CN Gargantuan dragon
Init +0; **Senses** blindsense 60 ft., darkvision 120 ft., keen senses; Listen +38, Spot +38
Languages Common, Draconic, Elven, Dwarven, Infernal, Giant; telepathy (see text)

AC 35, touch 6, flat-footed 35
(–4 size, +29 natural)
hp 375 (30 HD); fast healing 2; **DR** 15/magic; berserker power
Immune divination (see text)
Fort +28, **Ref** +26, **Will** +27

Speed 60 ft. (12 squares), fly 150 ft. (clumsy)
Melee bite +37 (4d8+11 plus Con drain plus dragon toxin) and
2 claws +38 each (4d6+5/19–20 plus dragon toxin plus trip) and
2 wings +37 each (2d8+5) and
tail slap +37 (4d6+16 plus trip)
Space 20 ft.; **Reach** 15 ft. (20 ft. with bite)
Base Atk +30; **Grp** +53
Atk Options Cleave, Great Cleave, Devastating Critical (claw), Overwhelming Critical, Power Attack, frightful presence, magic strike
Special Actions crush, tail sweep, twist of fate
Spell-Like Abilities (CL 11th):
At will—*charm monster* (DC 17, his exarchs only, CL 18th), *detect magic, read magic*
3/day—*scrying* (DC 17, on his exarchs only, CL 18th)
2/day—*shield, telekinesis* (DC 18)
1/day—*dispel magic, spell turning, globe of invulnerability*

Abilities Str 33, Dex 10, Con 23, Int 19, Wis 21, Cha 16
SQ create exarchs, sound imitation
Feats Cleave, Devastating Critical (claw)*, Draconic Knowledge*, Epic Reflexes*, Great Cleave, Improved Critical (claw), Improved Multiattack*, Multiattack, Overwhelming Critical*, Power Attack, Weapon Focus (claw)
* These feats appear in *Draconomicon*.
Skills Bluff +12, Concentration +21, Diplomacy +40, Intimidate +38, Knowledge (arcana) +37, Knowledge (geography) +37, Knowledge (history) +37, Listen +38, Search +37, Sense Motive +38, Spot +38

Keen Senses (Ex) See four times as well as a human in shadowy illumination; see twice as well in normal light.
Telepathy (Su) Chorranathau can communicate telepathically with any of his exarchs (10-mile range) and with other willing *xorvintaal* dragons (100-mile range).
Berserker Power (Su) When Chorranathau is reduced to 186 hit points or fewer, he gains a +5 bonus on attack rolls and damage rolls.
Divination Immunity (Ex) Nobody can learn about Chorranathau's future *xorvintaal* moves through divination spells and similar effects. Such effects can still reveal other information about him.
Constitution Drain (Su) Chorranathau's bite deals 2d4 points of Constitution drain (Fortitude DC 28 negates).
Dragon Toxin (Su) When Chorranathau hits a creature, that creature is exposed to dragon toxin and takes 25 points of damage at the start of each of Chorranathau's turns. Multiple wounds don't stack. Magical healing ends this effect but doesn't protect against subsequent exposure. The dragon toxin dissipates 1 round after Chorranathau dies.
Frightful Presence (Ex) 300-foot radius, 29 HD or fewer, Will DC 28 negates.
Trip (Ex) If Chorranathau hits with a claw or tail attack, he can attempt to trip (+33 check modifier) that opponent as a free action. If the attempt fails, the opponent cannot react to trip Chorranathau.
Crush (Ex) As a standard action, Chorranathau can land on Large or smaller creatures within in an area equal to his space. Those creatures take 4d8+16 points of bludgeoning damage and must succeed on a DC 28 Reflex save or be pinned. Pinned creatures take 4d8+16 points of bludgeoning damage each round they remain pinned.
Tail Sweep (Ex) As a standard action, Chorranathau can sweep his tail through a half-circle that has a 30-foot radius. The sweep deals 2d6+16 points of bludgeoning damage (Reflex DC 28 half).
Twist of Fate (Su) Chorranathau can spend an immediate action to produce one of the following effects.

When targeted by a spell that affects one or more targets (as opposed to an area spell), he can gain a +10 bonus on the saving throw against that spell. He subsequently loses his +5 insight bonus on saves for 1d4 rounds.

He can move 30 feet to avoid an area effect, but only if that movement would take him out of the effect's area. If he does so, he cannot move on his next turn.

When Chorranathau could make an attack of opportunity, he can instead flap his wings and blast wind at the foe that provoked the attack. The wing flap functions like a bull rush attempt (+11 bonus on the opposed check), except that Chorranathau doesn't move along with the foe being pushed (though the victim can still be pushed as far as the maximum distance Chorranathau could normally bull rush it). If the target is airborne, it is treated as one size smaller for the purpose of resolving the opposed check. This immediate action doesn't use up Chorranathau's attack of opportunity.

Devastating Critical (Ex) If Chorranathau confirms a critical threat with a claw attack, the opponent struck must succeed on a DC 36 Fortitude saving throw or die instantly (*Draconomicon* 68).
Draconic Knowledge (Ex) Chorranathau can make the equivalent of a bardic knowledge check (*PH* 28, +14) to reveal information about an item, event, or locale (*Draconomicon* 69).
Overwhelming Critical (Ex) If Chorranathau confirms a critical threat with a claw attack, he deals an extra 1d6 points of damage with that attack (*Draconomicon* 72).
Create Exarchs (Sp) Chorranathau can perform an hour-long ritual to designate a creature as his exarch in the ongoing great game. Doing so gives the *xorvintaal* exarch template (see page 47) to the designated creature.
Sound Imitation (Ex) Chorranathau can mimic any sound he has heard (Will DC 28 detects the ruse).

Chorranathau is a master of *xorvintaal*, and he is known widely among the other dragons of the great game. He counts dozens of younger dragons as his vassals.

Strategies and Tactics

Chorranathau arrays high-level spellcaster exarchs (such as the Shrouded Vizier) to force foes closer to him. He also employs terrain and sound imitation to ensure that enemies don't encounter him until they're practically standing next to him.

Once an adversary approaches to what Chorranathau feels is a sufficiently close distance, he attacks, evoking his frightful presence. He makes a full attack whenever possible, spreading his attacks around at first so that everyone has to deal with his dragon toxin ability. He then focuses on the opponent that dealt him the largest amount of damage.

Whenever he would otherwise make an attack of opportunity for the first time in a round, he instead uses his twist of fate ability to buffet a foe. He then has another attack of opportunity available.

Sample Encounters

Chorranathau has several dozen exarchs, a testament to his numerous victories in the great game. He's best used as a powerful but distant force. Chorranathau rarely leaves his lair, so only after dealing with layers of exarchs and braving the dangers of the fang dragon's abode might the PCs actually meet him.

The Master's Test (EL 18): Working through intermediaries and exarchs, Chorranathau has had his eye on the PCs for some time. Impressed with their power, the fang dragon has decided that the characters might make good exarchs, but he wants to test their mettle firsthand. Chorranathau meets the PCs in an immense courtyard and explains the nature of the test—a trial by combat that any participant can exit at any time by saying "I yield." The dragon then engages the characters in battle. Chorranathau doesn't pull punches in the fight, except to avoid targets so weak that he can kill them with a single blow. Chorranathau yields when reduced to 74 hit points or fewer, and he has a high-level cleric exarch restore slain PCs to life when the battle is over.

Called onto the Carpet (EL 20): Chorranathau and his Shrouded Vizier (female human necromancer 18) invite the PCs into the ancient fang dragon's lair to explain recent actions the characters have perpetrated that hindered Chorranathau's progress in the great game. The PCs have to negotiate a solution or otherwise mollify Chorranathau, while the vizier employs a battery of divination spells to make sure they speak truly and deal fairly. The PCs might walk out as Chorranathau's newest exarchs, they might walk out chastened and warned against further interference, or they might not walk out at all.

Ecology

Chorranathau is physically typical for a fang dragon of his size and age. He is patient and calculating compared to any younger fang dragon, and he tempers his appetites to suit his desires in the great game.

Environment: Chorranathau uses an ancient mountain temple as his lair. His Knights of the Teeth (low-level mercenary fighters) scour the nearby valleys for elk, deer, and other delicacies so that Chorranathau doesn't have to leave his home.

Over centuries spent fending off *xorvintaal* rivals, Chorranathau has installed a wide array of deadly traps throughout the temple. At any given time, about a dozen high-level exarchs reside in the temple, ready to defend their master and otherwise do his bidding.

Physical Characteristics: Chorranathau is 85 feet long from snout to tail tip. He stands 16 feet tall on all fours and has a wingspan of 70 feet. He weighs eighty tons.

Alignment: In Chorranathau's mind, the battle between good and evil is a philosophical trifle that pales in comparison to the all-encompassing passion that is *xorvintaal*. All other creatures are pieces in the game. Chorranathau is chaotic neutral.

Society

Chorranathau's interest in the great game has grown into an obsession. He's always plotting the future moves of his exarchs and the younger *xorvintaal* dragons under his patronage, trying to think ahead as many moves as possible.

But at this point in the game, the only *xorvintaal* dragons that can challenge Chorranathau are likewise brilliant and capable. So Chorranathau has started cultivating a reputation for being ruthless and unpredictable. The reputation fits his natural proclivities, and Chorranathau finds that a lot of his *xorvintaal* rivals would rather contend with more predictable opposition, leaving Chorranathau free to chip away at their territories with less risk of reprisal.

Typical Treasure

In his lair, Chorranathau has an immense pile of treasure. Start with quintuple standard for Chorranathau himself, or 235,000 gp, and put the bulk of the treasure from other encounters within Chorranathau's temple into his hoard as well.

CHORRANATHAU LORE

Characters who have ranks in Knowledge (arcana) can learn more about Chorranathau. When a character makes a successful skill check, the following lore is revealed, including the information from lower DCs. The DCs for this check are lower than normal because of Chorranathau's renown.

Knowledge (Arcana)

DC	Result
15	Chorranathau is a reclusive dragon held in high esteem by other dragons.
20	A fang dragon, Chorranathau is a master player in *xorvintaal*, the great game of dragons.
25	Chorranathau's lair is an ancient temple high in the southern mountains. To venture there is to invite certain death.
30	Chorranathau is a powerful patron to various younger dragons playing the great game. Because some of those vassals are good and others are evil, he sometimes has to intervene to keep them from fighting one another.

MORLICANTHA

With a flash of light, the beautiful female before you transforms into a dragon the size of a horse, its silver scales flashing and glittering as it coils its tail around itself.

MORLICANTHA **CR 13**

Female young adult silver dragon
LG Large dragon (cold)
Init +0; **Senses** blindsense 60 ft., darkvision 120 ft., keen senses; Listen +26, Spot +26
Aura energy (5 ft.)
Languages Celestial, Common, Draconic, Dwarven, Giant, Sylvan; telepathy (see text)

AC 27, touch 9, flat-footed 27 (–1 size, +18 natural)
hp 199 (19 HD); **DR** 5/magic
Immune acid, cold, divination (see text)
Fort +17, **Ref** +13, **Will** +19

Speed 40 ft. (8 squares), fly 150 ft. (poor); cloudwalking
Melee bite +24 (2d6+6) and
2 claws +24 each (1d8+3) and
2 wings +24 each (1d6+3) and
tail slap +24 (1d8+9)
Space 10 ft.; **Reach** 5 ft. (10 ft. with bite)
Base Atk +19; **Grp** +29
Atk Options Power Attack, frightful presence, magic strike
Special Actions cold breath weapon, paralysis gas breath weapon
Spell-Like Abilities (CL 5th):
At will—*charm monster* (DC 18, her exarchs only, CL 13th)
3/day—*scrying* (DC 18, her exarchs only, CL 13th)
2/day—*feather fall*

Abilities Str 23, Dex 10, Con 19, Int 18, Wis 19, Cha 18
SQ alternate form, create exarchs
Feats Improved Multiattack*, Iron Will, Maximize Breath*, Multiattack, Overcome Weakness*, Power Attack, Suppress Weakness*
* These feats appear in *Draconomicon*.
Skills Bluff +15, Diplomacy +32, Knowledge (arcana) +26, Knowledge (local) +26, Knowledge (nobility and royalty) +26, Listen +26, Search +26, Sense Motive +26, Spellcraft +15, Spot +26

Keen Senses (Ex) See four times as well as a human in shadowy illumination; see twice as well in normal light.
Energy Aura (Su) At will, Morlicantha can surround her body with an icy nimbus. At the start of each of Morlicantha's turns, the nimbus deals 25 points of cold damage to adjacent creatures. If Morlicantha uses her cold breath weapon, she loses her energy aura until the end of her next turn.
Telepathy (Su) Morlicantha can communicate telepathically with any of her exarchs (10-mile range) and with other willing *xorvintaal* dragons (100-mile range).
Divination Immunity (Ex) Nobody can learn about Morlicantha's future *xorvintaal* moves through divination spells and similar effects. Such effects can still reveal other information about her.
Cloudwalking (Su) Morlicantha can tread on clouds or fog as if the surface were solid.
Frightful Presence (Ex) 150-foot radius, 19 HD or fewer, Will DC 23 negates.
Cold Breath Weapon (Su) 40-foot cone, once every 1d4 rounds, damage 10d8 cold, Reflex DC 23 half.
Paralysis Gas Breath Weapon (Su) 40-foot cone, once every 1d4 rounds, paralysis 1d6+5 rounds, Reflex DC 23 negates.
Maximize Breath Morlicantha can maximize the effect of either breath weapon (dealing 80 points of cold damage or paralyzing for 11 rounds). If she does so, she can't use either breath weapon for 1d4+3 rounds (*Draconomicon* 71).
Overcome Weakness Morlicantha is no longer vulnerable to fire (*Draconomicon* 72). Suppress Weakness is a prerequisite for this feat but has no additional effect.
Alternate Form (Su) Morlicantha can assume any animal or humanoid form.
Create Exarchs (Sp) Morlicantha can perform an hour-long ritual to designate a creature as her exarch in the ongoing great game. Doing so gives the *xorvintaal* exarch template (see page 47) to the designated creature.

Morlicantha is an ambitious but principled *xorvintaal* dragon that is relatively new to the great game. She's actively seeking worthy members of the "unwinged races" to aid her efforts and, in time, become her exarchs.

Strategies and Tactics

In battle, resolve Morlicantha's frightful presence as soon as the fight starts. If she wants to kill her enemies, she uses a maximized cold breath weapon right away. Doing so puts the breath weapon on the shelf for a longer time, but it puts her energy aura into play starting in round 3 (assuming she breathes in round 1). She behaves evasively or tries to seize advantageous terrain in round 2, hoping the PCs catch up to her just in time for her energy aura to deal damage at the start of round 3. Then she lays down the law with her natural attacks, using Power Attack only conservatively.

If Morlicantha doesn't want to kill her attackers, then she employs her paralysis breath weapon instead. Some of her foes have recovered from paralysis to find themselves pinned underneath Morlicantha's considerable bulk. Then the questioning begins.

Sample Encounters

Morlicantha travels a great deal, trying to learn as much as she can about her rivals in the great game. She goes incognito as a beautiful half-elf female or a wizened human crone. Encounters with Morlicantha walk a fine line between outright combat and a test for suitability as an ally.

Here Comes the Cavalry (EL 11): Morlicantha appears in half-elf form and offers the PCs a bargain. She's willing to get them out of their current dilemma if they accept a short detour to slay a ten-headed pyrohydra in its nearby lair. The creature is a pawn in another *xorvintaal* dragon's plans, and Morlicantha doesn't want to move against the dragon directly.

You Don't Look So Tough (EL 13): In her crone form, Morlicantha observes the PCs in a public setting. Then she approaches a thin-skinned or impulsive PC and attempts to goad him or her into an arm-wrestling match, footrace, or other athletic feat. If the character demurs, Morlicantha taunts and belittles that PC loud enough for everyone to hear. If a fight breaks out, Morlicantha participates until reduced to 50 hit points or fewer. Then she flies away, shouting, "We'll meet again!" If the characters win the competition or defeat her in combat, Morlicantha might return to offer them a role in her next *xorvintaal* move.

Ecology

An inveterate traveler, Morlicantha is often on the road spying on her rivals or making moves against their territory. Because Morlicantha spends so much time in her favorite alternate forms, she has developed a taste for food favored by humanoids.

Environment: Unusual for a silver dragon, Morlicantha's lair is on a small coral atoll off a forbidding coast. Morlicantha is often away playing the great game, but a band of tritons guards her island. A network of tunnels extends from the atoll to below the seafloor. Morlicantha isn't the first dragon to call this atoll home, and because of her obsession with *xorvintaal*, she hasn't fully explored all the tunnels yet.

Physical Characteristics: In her true form, Morlicantha is 35 feet long and has a wingspan of 50 feet. She weighs 2,500 pounds. Her alternate forms adhere to racial averages.

Alignment: Morlicantha has a deep and abiding respect for the rules of *xorvintaal*, but her sense of fair play doesn't dull her competitive edge one bit. When it comes to *xorvintaal*, she acts as aggressively as the rules allow. She is lawful good.

Society

Morlicantha is obsessed with *xorvintaal*, but she has opted for a risky play style. She refuses to ally herself with more powerful dragons, choosing to go it alone. This choice affords her great freedom, but any other dragon can move on her territory and lair without having to worry about a powerful patron. Of course, other dragons don't necessarily know Morlicantha is a loner.

Morlicantha is exceedingly wary of other dragons, and that's one reason why she's so keen to get allies from what she calls the "unwinged races." Among humans and their ilk, she can be helpful and even gregarious. But in the presence of dragons or their exarchs, she watches her words carefully and tries to remain as unobtrusive as possible.

MORLICANTHA LORE

Characters who have ranks in Knowledge (arcana) can learn more about Morlicantha. When a character makes a successful skill check, the following lore is revealed, including the information from lower DCs. Because she's new to *xorvintaal*, little is known about her.

Knowledge (Arcana)

DC	Result
23	Morlicantha is a silver dragon fond of taking humanoid form and manipulating people.
28	She plays *xorvintaal*, the dragons' great game, and is unaffiliated with any powerful dragons.

Typical Treasure

In her lair, Morlicantha has triple standard treasure for a CR 13 monster, or 39,000 gp. In addition, when she travels as a maiden or a crone, Morlicantha is equipped as a 10th-level NPC.

CREATING A XORVINTAAL DRAGON

"*Xorvintaal* dragon" is an acquired template that can be added to any young adult or older true dragon (referred to hereafter as the base dragon).

Challenge Rating: Same as base creature or higher, depending on how many *xorvintaal* abilities it has (see below).

Languages: A *xorvintaal* dragon can communicate telepathically with any of its exarchs (10-mile range) and with willing *xorvintaal* dragons (100-mile range).

Immune: Nobody can learn about a *xorvintaal* dragon's future game moves through divination spells and similar effects. Such effects can still reveal other information about a *xorvintaal* dragon.

Spell Resistance: *Xorvintaal* dragons do not have spell resistance.

Saving Throws: A *xorvintaal* dragon gains a +1 insight bonus on saving throws for every two age categories it has. A young adult, for example, gains a +2 insight bonus.

Spells: *Xorvintaal* dragons lose the ability to cast spells.

Spell-Like Abilities: A *xorvintaal* dragon retains all spell-like abilities, and it gains the following.

Charm Monster (Sp): At will, a *xorvintaal* dragon can use *charm monster* on its exarchs (caster level 8th + the dragon's age category).

Scrying (Sp): Three times per day, a *xorvintaal* dragon can use *scrying* with one of its exarchs as the target (caster level 8th + the dragon's age category).

Special Qualities: A *xorvintaal* dragon has all the special qualities of the base dragon, plus the following special qualities.

Create Exarchs (Sp): A *xorvintaal* dragon can perform an hour-long ritual to designate a creature as an exarch in the ongoing great game. Doing so gives the *xorvintaal* exarch template (page 47) to the designated creature or gives five favor tokens to a creature that is already an exarch.

Xorvintaal Abilities (Su): A *xorvintaal* dragon chooses one of these abilities after it completes the Ritual of *Xorvintaal*, and it earns more by achieving victories in the great game.

The average *xorvintaal* dragon has one of these abilities, plus another one for every two age categories it attains beyond young adult. But if you're creating a particularly successful *xorvintaal* dragon, you can add more *xorvintaal* abilities, adding 1 to the Challenge Rating of the dragon for each extra *xorvintaal* ability.

Alternate Form: Three times per day, a *xorvintaal* dragon can assume any animal or humanoid form of Medium size or smaller.

Berserker Power: Once reduced to half of its full normal hit points or fewer, a *xorvintaal* dragon receives a +1 bonus on melee attack rolls and damage rolls for every two age categories it has. The bonus lasts until the dragon heals to half its full normal hit points or higher.

Deep Breath: If a *xorvintaal* dragon spends a move action to visibly inhale, it can deliver its breath weapon on the following round with extra potency, dealing an extra 4 dice of damage (of whatever dice the breath weapon ordinarily deals) and increasing the DC of the Reflex save by 4. The deep breath ability doesn't change the recharge time for the breath weapon.

Draconic Roar: As a swift action, a *xorvintaal* dragon can emit an astounding roar. Doing so deals half the dragon's breath weapon damage in sonic damage and deafens all creatures within 30 feet of the dragon. A successful Fortitude saving throw (same DC as the breath weapon) halves the damage and negates the deafening. Deafened characters naturally regain their hearing after 1 hour.

Once a *xorvintaal* dragon uses its draconic roar, it can't use it again until after it uses its breath weapon. When rolling to see how long it takes the breath weapon to recharge, use the same result – 1 to determine when the roar is available again.

Dragon Eyes: A *xorvintaal* dragon can keep tabs on its lair and territory with an array of floating magic eyes that patrol and report back to the dragon. This effect functions like the *prying eyes* spell, except that a *xorvintaal* dragon receives two floating eyes per age category it has. The dragon eyes last indefinitely; when one is destroyed, another one forms next to the dragon at the start of its next turn. Whenever an eye returns to the dragon, the dragon can give the eye new instructions.

Dragon Toxin: When it is in combat, a *xorvintaal* dragon's fangs and claws drip a corrosive fluid called dragon toxin. Any creature dealt damage by the *xorvintaal* dragon's bite or claw attacks is affected by dragon toxin. At the start of each of the dragon's turns, each creature affected by dragon toxin takes an extra 5 points of damage for every two age categories the dragon has. Multiple

Illus. by W. Reynolds

Chorranathau and Morlicantha

wounds don't deal damage multiple times—a creature is either affected by dragon toxin or not. Any form of magical healing eliminates dragon toxin currently affecting a creature but doesn't protect against subsequent exposure. Its dragon toxin harmlessly dissipates 1 round after a *xorvintaal* dragon dies.

Energy Aura: The potent energy within a *xorvintaal* dragon pours out of its body, damaging everyone nearby. At the start of each of the dragon's turns, this energy deals 5 points of damage (of the same type as its breath weapon) per age category to all creatures adjacent to the dragon. The aura is obvious to all who can see the dragon. A red dragon, for example, is wreathed in flame; a blue dragon has a corona of electricity; and green and black dragons vent corrosive gas. If the dragon uses its breath weapon, it loses its energy until the end of its next turn. Dragons that have no breath weapon cannot acquire this power.

Intimidating Presence: This ability replaces the base dragon's frightful presence. When another NPC comes within a distance of 30 feet × the dragon's age category away from a *xorvintaal* dragon, that dragon can make an Intimidate check opposed by the NPC's level check (1d20 + Hit Dice + Wis modifier + modifiers on saves against fear). If the dragon beats the NPC's level check result, then that NPC's attitude improves to friendly as long as it's within range and for 1d6×10 minutes after it's out of range. After this time, the NPC's attitude shifts to unfriendly (or, if already unfriendly, to hostile).

Recall Exarch: A *xorvintaal* dragon can recall an exarch. This ability functions like the *word of recall* spell, except that the dragon, not the exarch, instigates it. The exarch receives forewarning—enough time to grab any adjacent objects or touch any willing adjacent creatures. Using this ability normally takes a standard action, but the dragon can take 10 points of damage per age category to use it as a swift action.

When building an encounter with a *xorvintaal* dragon that has this ability, award experience points separately for each exarch called, and calculate the overall encounter level by including the called creatures as well. After all, they're a significant part of the challenge, and once they're called, they're with the *xorvintaal* dragon for the rest of the encounter.

Rejuvenation: When a *xorvintaal* dragon reaches –10 hit points, it doesn't actually die. All life functions cease, however, and the dragon is functionally a corpse for the purpose of resolving all spells that affect dead bodies. It takes a Heal check (DC 20 + dragon's age category) to detect any vital signs. It remains at –10 hit points no matter what damage or healing it receives. Death effects still affect the dragon normally, and dismembering or skinning the corpse is sufficient to kill it.

When 10 minutes have passed since the dragon last took damage, it gains fast healing 10. It still appears dead until it reaches its full normal hit points.

Twist of Fate: Taking this ability gives a *xorvintaal* dragon an array of benefits, each activated as an immediate action in response to a specific trigger.

- When subject to a targeted spell, a *xorvintaal* dragon can take an immediate action to try to disrupt the incoming spell. The effort grants the dragon a bonus on the saving throw equal to its age category. Once the dragon uses the saving throw bonus, its insight bonus on saves disappears for 1d4 rounds.
- When subject to an area spell or effect, a *xorvintaal* dragon can take an immediate action to move up to 30 feet, but only if doing so would take it out of the effect's area. The dragon must take the most direct available route to the nearest safe squares, and it provokes attacks of opportunity as normal for its movement. If the dragon makes this move, it can't move during its next turn.
- When the dragon could make an attack of opportunity, it can instead flap its wings and blast wind at the foe that provoked the attack. The wing flap functions like a bull rush attempt, except that the dragon doesn't move along with the foe being pushed (though the victim can still be pushed as far as the maximum distance the dragon could normally bull rush it). If the other creature is airborne, then it counts as one size smaller for the purpose of resolving the opposed check.

  If a *xorvintaal* dragon takes this immediate action, it can't use its wing attacks during its next turn. However, this immediate action doesn't use up one of the dragon's attacks of opportunity.

SINGH THE IMMENSE

The human stepping out of the shadows is clearly obese, but he moves with a catlike quickness despite his bulk. He is dressed regally, his shining breastplate fitted to his girth.

SINGH THE IMMENSE **CR 14**

Male human rogue 7/shadowdancer 6

N Medium humanoid

Init +4; **Senses** darkvision 60 ft.; Listen +1, Spot +1

Languages Common; telepathy (see text)

AC 20, touch 14, flat-footed 20; Dodge, Mobility, improved uncanny dodge (+6 armor, +4 Dex)

hp 106 (13 HD); defensive roll

Resist evasion

Fort +8, **Ref** +14, **Will** +7

Speed 30 ft. (6 squares); Spring Attack, shadow jump

Melee short sword +13/+8 (1d6+4/19–20) or

Melee short sword +11/+6 (1d6+4/19–20) and short sword +11 (1d6+2/19–20)

Base Atk +9; **Grp** +12

Atk Options Combat Reflexes, sneak attack +4d6

Special Actions dragon's favor, hide in plain sight, summon shadow

Spell-Like Abilities (CL 6th):

1/day—*silent image* (DC 10)

Abilities Str 17, Dex 18, Con 18, Int 10, Wis 12, Cha 8

SQ trapfinding, trap sense +2

Feats Combat Reflexes, Dodge, Iron Will, Mobility, Spring Attack, Two-Weapon Fighting
Skills Balance +20, Climb +11, Disable Device +11, Hide +24, Jump +19, Listen +1, Move Silently +24, Open Lock +15, Perform (dance) +14, Search +13, Spot +1, Tumble +20
Possessions *+1 mithral breastplate, 2 +1 short swords, amulet of health +4, belt of giant strength +4, boots of elvenkind, cloak of elvenkind,* masterwork thieves' tools

Telepathy (Su) Singh can communicate telepathically with Chorranathau at a range of up to 100 miles.
Defensive Roll (Ex) Once per day, when Singh would take damage reducing him to 0 hit points or fewer, he can instead roll with the blow by making a Reflex save (DC equal to damage dealt). If he succeeds, he takes half damage from the blow.
Shadow Jump (Su) Singh can move as if using a *dimension door* effect as long as the origin and arrival points contain some shadow. He can transport himself up to 40 feet per day, broken up between jumps as Singh sees fit. Jumps shorter than 10 feet still count as 10 feet.
Dragon's Favor (Su) Singh has five favor tokens he can spend to do Chorranathau's bidding or get out of a tough situation. He can spend one or more tokens as an immediate action to gain one of the following benefits.

Frightful Presence: One token, 300-foot radius, 12 HD or fewer, Will DC 15 negates.

Dragon Wing: If Singh clasps hands with one or more other exarchs of Chorranathau, and each spends one token, they all gain a fly speed of 150 feet (clumsy) for as long as they keep holding the hand of at least one fellow exarch.

Draconic Reverie: By expending one token, Singh can gain a +4 bonus on his next saving throw or a +4 bonus on his next attack roll.

Lair's Return: Singh can spend two tokens to cast *word of recall*. His sanctuary is Chorranathau's mountain temple.

Lair's Rebirth: If Singh takes damage that would reduce him to –10 hit points, he can instead spend all his remaining tokens (at least one) to return to Chorranathau's mountain temple, unconscious and with 0 hit points.

Hide in Plain Sight (Su) Singh can hide when being observed as long as he is within 10 feet of a shadow other than his own.
Summon Shadow (Su) Singh has a 4 HD shadow, which is neutral and has no create spawn ability, as a companion.

SINGH LORE

Characters who have ranks in Knowledge (local) can learn more about Singh. When a character makes a successful skill check, the following lore is revealed, including the information from lower DCs.

Knowledge (Local)

DC	Result
24	They call Singh "the immense" because he's so fat. But don't be fooled. He's a stone cold killer with the grace of a tiger.
29	Singh used to be a thief and a mercenary, and he knows some esoteric magic that lets him manipulate the shadows.
34	It is said that Singh serves Chorranathau the Inscrutable, a mighty fang dragon. He is known for his love of huge amounts of the finest food.

A former thief, adventurer, and hired killer, Singh the Immense is now an exarch doing the bidding of Chorranathau the Inscrutable.

Strategies and Tactics

Singh attacks from the shadows whenever possible, accompanied by his shadow minion. His shadow flanks foes, allowing Singh to use sneak attack often. Tumble and Mobility help keep Singh out of harm's way as he moves, and he uses Spring Attack and shadow jump to change his position when he needs to. He's not afraid of toe-to-toe combat, making full attacks until his safety is compromised. He uses *silent image* primarily to confuse his enemies in combat.

Sample Encounters

Singh works alone (not counting his shadow), and he values discretion over valor.

Message from the Master (EL 14): If the PCs interfere with Chorranathau's *xorvintaal* plans, Singh stalks them until they're resting or otherwise off guard. Then he attacks, whispering dire warnings and unsavory oaths as he fights. After he has delivered his message and bloodied the PCs, he employs shadow jump and, if necessary, lair's return to escape.

Sweep the Pawns from the Board (EL 16): Singh and two troll hunters (*MM* 247) are on a straightforward mission: assassinate the PCs. They maximize the element of surprise, but they flee when reduced below 25% of their full normal hit points.

Ecology

Singh is human. He loves food, eating as much in a day as several average people, and he relishes the chance to experience a new delicacy or gourmet dish.

Environment: Singh splits his time between his master's lair and a series of countryside manors and city town houses. He's particularly fond of a villa that has an adjacent vineyard, and he has started teaching the shadowdancer's art to some promising students there.

Physical Characteristics: Singh has earned his nickname—he's nearly 7 feet tall and weighs 550 pounds. But beneath the rolls of fat are rock-hard muscle, and relentless training has enabled Singh to retain his grace and agility.

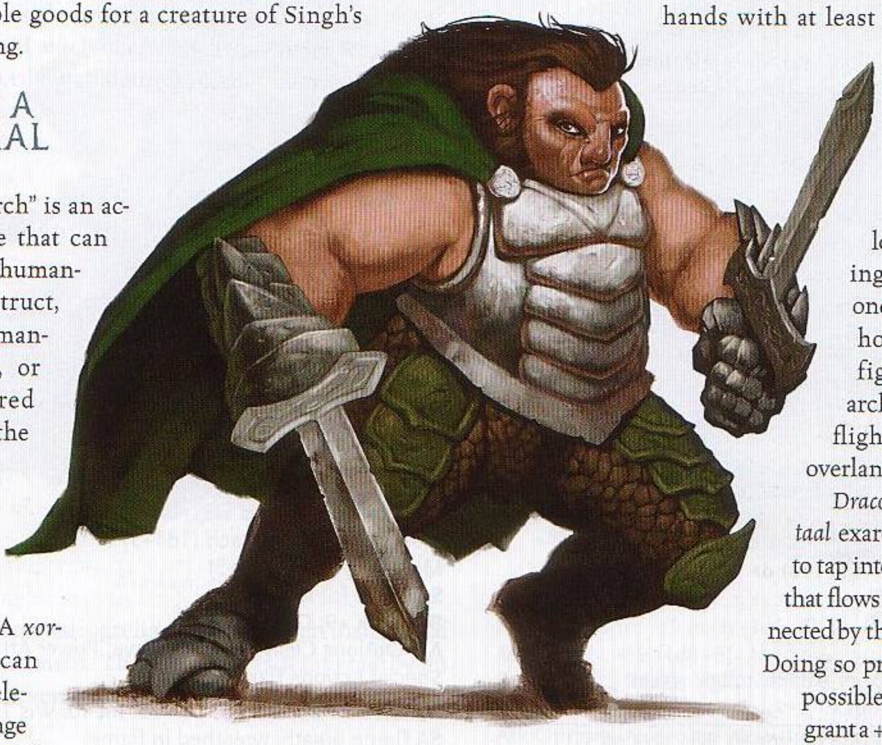
Alignment: Singh's neutrality represents amoral indifference to ethical matters, not any sort of reverence for a cosmic balance. Singh acts to keep himself safe, powerful, and sated.

Society

Singh is cautious and a little paranoid when on a mission for his master. He speaks only when he must—he'd rather interact with a fine bottle of wine or a rare delicacy than another person—and even then he usually whispers. A mercenary at heart, Singh is satisfied with his current role. Chorranathau the Inscrutable cares for his exarchs well, and Singh is accustomed to living an extravagant lifestyle.

Typical Treasure

Singh carries nearly all of his magic items on his person, but he has even more wealth in his various town houses and villas, which are guarded by his personal soldiers. In any given home are enough valuables to equal standard coins and double goods for a creature of Singh's Challenge Rating.



Singh the Immense

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CREATING A XORVINTAAL EXARCH

"*Xorvintaal* exarch" is an acquired template that can be added to any humanoid, living construct, monstrous humanoid, fey, giant, or undead (referred to hereafter as the base creature).

Challenge Rating: Same as base creature +1.

Languages: A *xorvintaal* exarch can communicate telepathically at a range of 100 miles with the *xorvintaal* dragon that turned it into an exarch.

Dragon's Favor (Su): A *xorvintaal* exarch has five favor tokens. It can spend any number of tokens as an immediate action to gain one of the following benefits.

Energy Immunity: A *xorvintaal* exarch can spend a favor token to gain immunity to the same type of energy type that its master's breath weapon is made up of. The immunity lasts 10 minutes. If an exarch's dragon does not have a breath weapon, the exarch cannot gain this benefit.

Frightful Presence: A *xorvintaal* exarch can spend a token to gain frightful presence to the same range as its draconic master. Whenever the exarch attacks or charges, creatures that have fewer Hit Dice than it must succeed on a Will save (DC 10 + 1/2 the exarch's HD + its Cha modifier) or become shaken for as long as they remain within range. A creature that successfully saves cannot be affected by that same exarch's frightful presence for 24 hours.

Dragon Wing: If a *xorvintaal* exarch clasps hands with at least one other exarch of the same dragon, and each spends one token, they all gain the fly speed of their *xorvintaal* dragon master for as long as they keep holding the hand of at least one fellow exarch. Since holding hands makes fighting difficult, exarchs commonly use this flight only as a means of overland travel.

Draconic Reverie: A *xorvintaal* exarch can spend a token to tap into the draconic wisdom that flows through all those connected by the Ritual of *Xorvintaal*. Doing so provides a glimpse of a possible future—enough to grant a +4 bonus on the exarch's next saving throw or a +4 bonus on the exarch's next attack roll.

Lair's Return: A *xorvintaal* exarch can spend two tokens to use *word of recall*. The exarch's sanctuary is always the lair of its *xorvintaal* dragon master.

Lair's Rebirth: If a *xorvintaal* exarch takes damage that would reduce it to –10 hit points, it can instead spend all its remaining tokens (at least one) to instantly return to the lair of its *xorvintaal* dragon master, unconscious and with 0 hit points.

Level Adjustment: +2.

PCS AS EXARCHS

Rewards inherent in the great game might attract the PCs. A *xorvintaal* dragon can give them the *xorvintaal* exarch template. That dragon can renew the ritual on an exarch to restore five favor tokens, but the dragon's ability to do so is limited by that dragon's success in the great game.

Rather than trying to score the great game, use the characters' performance as a determining factor, rewarding their success with more favor tokens. PCs who fail might be denied tokens not because their master wishes them ill, but because that dragon has insufficient stature in the great game to repeat the exarch ritual.

The dragon can be subtly used to tell the characters how to use their tokens. "Just defeat Roallaxathan, and my position in the great game will be secure enough to restore my favor," a dragon might say. Or the dragon might say, "Our position is tenuous; probe Roallaxathan's defenses, but do not overextend yourself or me." Either message tells the characters how likely they are to gain more favor tokens, indicating how freely the PCs should spend the ones they have.

ELEMENTAL MAGE

Elemental magi are giants descended from ogres, similar in appearance to ogre mages. Despite their rarity, elemental magi are not unique individuals, but rather different members of the same race with varying appearances and abilities. From the highlands, they emerge without warning, either singly or as a group, to conquer and scourge the lands of weaker people.

KEN-KUNI

The ground splits in front of you, and rocks tumble down into your path. Sliding down in a shower of dust and pebbles comes a horned giant clad in banded armor, carrying an enormous sword in its hand. "Trespassers!" it intones in a voice that shakes the earth beneath your feet.

KEN-KUNI — CR 8

Usually NE Large giant (earth)
Init +0; **Senses** low-light vision; Listen +7, Spot +7
Languages Common, Giant

AC 23, touch 9, flat-footed 23
(–1 size, +6 armor, +8 natural)
hp 84 (8 HD); fast healing 5; **DR** 10/magic
Fort +12, **Ref** +2, **Will** +3

Speed 30 ft. (6 squares) in banded mail, base speed 40 ft., burrow 10 ft.
Melee mwk greatsword +15/+10 (3d6+12/19–20) or
Melee 2 slams +13 each (1d4+8) or
Melee gore +13 (1d8+8)
Space 10 ft.; **Reach** 10 ft.
Base Atk +6; **Grp** +18
Atk Options Cleave, Power Attack, magic strike
Special Actions earthshock

Abilities Str 27, Dex 11, Con 23, Int 10, Wis 12, Cha 11
SA earthshock, magic strike
SQ shared strength
Feats Cleave, Power Attack, Weapon Focus (greatsword)
Skills Climb +3, Intimidate +4, Knowledge (nature) +2, Listen +7, Search +2, Spot +7
Advancement by character class; **Favored Class** fighter
Possessions masterwork banded mail, masterwork greatsword

Earthshock (Su) Once every 1d4 rounds, a ken-kuni can cause an earth tremor. This can affect either every square adjacent to the ken-kuni or a 30-foot line extending out from the creature. Anyone in the area must succed on a DC 20 Reflex save or be knocked prone and take 1d4 points of nonlethal damage. The save DC is Constitution-based.

If a ken-li and a ken-sun are both within 60 feet, the ken-kuni can use this ability every round. Elemental magi are immune to this ability.

Shared Strength (Su) When a ken-kuni is within 60 feet of one or more elemental mages and must make a saving throw, it uses the highest save bonus among the group.

Ken-kunis are three-horned, ogrelike giants of great strength and martial prowess. Not as clever or as ambitious as the other elemental magi, they prefer to stake a claim and defend it.

Most often encountered alone on hillside paths or in rocky terrain where they have settled, ken-kunis demand tribute from anyone passing through their territory. Other elemental magi press ken-kunis into military service. At war, ken-kunis shatter settlement defenses and break up enemy troop formations.

KEN-LI

A wave of heat presages the arrival of this towering, horned giant. Smoke flows from the creature's mouth and spirals around its body as it laughs, long and deep, at the sight of you. Firelight gleams from its bronzed flesh. Raising its sword, it inhales deeply, and flame quickens in its gaping mouth.

KEN-LI — CR 10

Usually CE Large giant (fire)
Init +3; **Senses** low-light vision; Listen +8, Spot +8
Aura wreathed in flame (5 ft.)
Languages Common, Giant

AC 20, touch 12, flat-footed 17
(–1 size, +3 Dex, +8 natural)
hp 138 (12 HD); fast healing 10
Immune fire
Fort +15, **Ref** +7, **Will** +11
Weakness vulnerability to cold

Speed 50 ft. (10 squares)
Melee *+1 greatsword* +15/+10 (3d6+8) or
Melee 2 slams +13 each (1d4+5) or
Melee gore +13 (1d8+5)
Space 10 ft.; **Reach** 10 ft.
Base Atk +9; **Grp** +18
Atk Options Cleave, Great Cleave, Power Attack
Special Actions flame breath

Abilities Str 20, Dex 17, Con 25, Int 10, Wis 18, Cha 10.
SA flame breath, wreathed in flame
SQ shared strength
Feats Cleave, Great Cleave, Iron Will, Power Attack, Weapon Focus (greatsword)
Skills Balance +5, Climb +9, Handle Animal +4, Intimidate +4, Knowledge (nature) +4, Listen +8, Search +4, Spot +8
Advancement by character class; **Favored Class** fighter
Possessions *+1 greatsword*

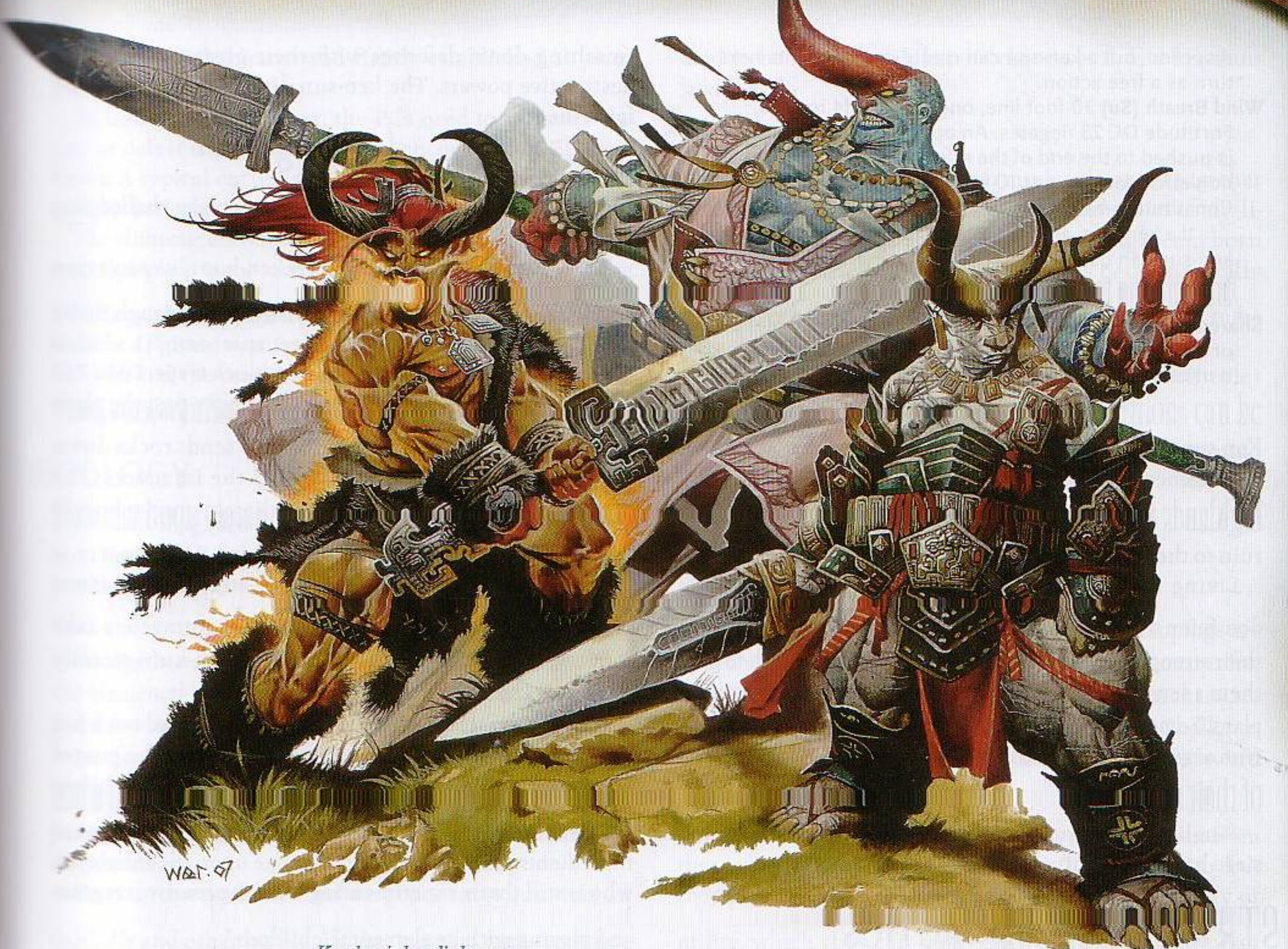
Wreathed in Flame (Su) Creatures take 1d3 points of fire damage at the end of a ken-li's turn if they are within 5 feet of it. Furthermore, creatures that strike or touch a ken-li with their body or a weapon take 1d3 points of fire damage. A creature can take damage from touching or striking a ken-li only once per turn. The creature can suppress this ability at will.

Elemental magi are immune to this ability.

Flame Breath (Su) 30-foot line, once every 1d4 rounds, damage 6d6 fire, Reflex DC 23 half. The save DC is Constitution-based.

If a ken-kuni and a ken-sun are both within 60 feet, the ken-li can use this ability every round. Elemental magi are immune to this ability.

Shared Strength (Su) When a ken-li is within 60 feet of one or more elemental mages and must make a saving throw, it uses the highest save bonus among the group.



Ken-kuni, ken-li, ken-sun

Illus. by W. Reynolds

Ken-lis are two-horned, ogrelike giants of keen insight and malicious temperament. This behavior is tempered by an arrogance that prevents them from using their perceptiveness to the fullest.

Without leadership of some kind, a ken-li lives to destroy, indulging that desire at every opportunity. Left to its whims, it burns villages, roasts herds of cattle, and torches forests simply for enjoyment. When encountered alone, ken-lis are almost always engaged in one of these rampages. Otherwise, they are found as troops in ken-sun armies, where they are kept under control.

KEN-SUN

A craggy, horned giant turns its baleful gaze upon you, blue lips curling into a wicked smile and exposing sharp, serrated teeth. Its pale robe swirls around it as it gestures to summon its allies.

KEN-SUN **CR 13**

Usually LE Large giant (air)
Init +7; **Senses** low-light vision; Listen +12, Spot +12
Aura deflecting winds
Languages Common, Giant

AC 21, touch 12, flat-footed 18
(–1 size, +3 Dex, +9 natural)
hp 161 (17 HD); fast healing 10
Fort +15, **Ref** +8, **Will** +13

Speed 50 ft. (10 squares), fly 20 ft. (perfect); freedom of movement
Melee *+2 spear* +21/+16/+11 (2d6+14/×3) or
Melee 2 slams +19 each (1d6+8) or
Melee gore +19 (1d8+8)
Space 10 ft.; **Reach** 10 ft.
Base Atk +12; **Grp** +24
Atk Options Awesome Blow, Improved Bull Rush, Power Attack
Special Actions wind breath
Spell-Like Abilities (CL 17th):
2/day—*control weather*
1/day—*sleet storm*

Abilities Str 27, Dex 17, Con 20, Int 21, Wis 21, Cha 21
SA deflecting winds, spell-like abilities, wind breath
SQ shared strength
Feats Alertness, Awesome Blow, Improved Bull Rush, Improved Initiative, Iron Will, Power Attack
Skills Balance +9, Bluff +18, Climb +18, Concentration +15, Decipher Script +11, Diplomacy +17, Disguise +5 (+7 acting), Gather Information +11, Handle Animal +11, Heal +9, Intimidate +21, Jump +22, Knowledge (arcana) +14, Knowledge (nature) +9, Listen +12, Ride +5, Search +11, Sense Motive +15, Spellcraft +17, Spot +12, Survival +5 (+7 following tracks, +7 in aboveground natural environments)
Advancement by character class; **Favored Class** fighter
Possessions *+2 spear*

Deflecting Winds (Su) A ken-sun is surrounded by a tempest of air that affects every square adjacent to it with windstorm-level effects (*DMG* 95). The creature can suppress this ability at will.

Elemental magi are immune to this ability.

Freedom of Movement (Su) As the *freedom of movement* spell; continuous; caster level 15th. The effect can be dispelled, but a ken-sun can create it again on its next turn as a free action.

Wind Breath (Su) 30-foot line, once every 1d4 rounds, Fortitude DC 23 negates. An opponent that fails the save is pushed to the end of the effect, taking 1d4 points of nonlethal damage per 10 feet it is pushed. The save DC is Constitution-based.

If a ken-kuni and a ken-li are both within 60 feet, the ken-sun can use this ability every round. Elemental magi are immune to this ability.

Shared Strength (Su) When a ken-sun is within 60 feet of one or more elemental mages and must make a saving throw, it uses the highest save bonus among the group.

Ken-suns are one-horned, ogrelike giants possessed of wicked intelligence and magical prowess. They descend from the highlands at the head of armies or raiding parties, bringing ruin to the settlements below.

Living to lead and to rule, ken-suns desire complete dominion over everything that comes before them. They use their strength, size, and magic to gather armies, both to give them a sense of authority and to fuel their megalomaniacal plans. Sometimes these warbands can swell in size to become true armies, and ken-suns can even become absolute lords of their domains.

Ken-lis and ken-kunis often serve as trusted retainers and siege breakers within a ken-sun's army.

STRATEGIES AND TACTICS

Elemental magi are very different enemies depending whether they are encountered singly or together. Individually, they are quite formidable, but as a group they are far stronger.

Ken-kunis, when met alone, are usually defending their homes—a place from which they can control their surroundings and collect tribute from those who pass through. This home is typically a cave, a foothill or mountain path, or a ruin. A ken-kuni first prevents retreat, then panics its foes with an earthshock. It makes its demands from a position of strength.

Single ken-lis wander as ravagers on the outskirts of civilization. They raid and destroy villages, isolated temples, and roving caravans, then move on to find new playthings. Aggressive and straightforward, their only tactic is to strike hard and fast, making liberal use of their flame breath to lay waste to any opposition.

Ken-suns are rarely found without followers. They prefer to send their warbands after powerful enemies, then join the battle themselves after those foes are worn out. Frequently, ken-suns set up ambushes and use terrain to their advantage, especially when they think they have the upper hand. They use their breath weapon to control the battlefield, pushing back or trapping enemies to buy time, or to make a particular opponent easier prey for their minions.

When encountered together, elemental magi strike as a team. Ken-lis and ken-kunis join the ken-sun's followers, smashing down defenses with their great strength and destructive powers. The ken-sun directs the whole affair from the rear.

SAMPLE ENCOUNTERS

Individually or together, elemental magi make challenging opponents.

Ken-Kuni Toll Booth (EL 9): A ken-kuni lives in a cave overlooking a long, narrow road that winds through rocky hills. It has set up two traps 200 feet apart across a section of the road (these act as CR 5 falling block traps, *DMG* 72). The first one is delayed until travelers move past the place where it goes off. If triggered, the trap sends rocks down the slope, blocking the road behind the intruders. The second trap activates almost immediately upon whoever sets it off, cutting off the way forward. If the party is trapped, the ken-kuni demands a toll, attacking if it is not paid. The toll is 250 gp per person, but if travelers take too long to decide whether to pay, the ken-kuni steadily increases the price.

Ken-Li Squatter (EL 11): A ken-li has burned out a fire wizard's tower and taken up occupancy, along with a gang of five Medium fire elementals (*MM* 99) that were released when the ken-li's breath interacted with the wizard's alchemical ingredients. The evoker wants revenge upon the interloper, who is still there, experimenting with the reactive reagents and playing with its elemental "children."

Tribal Paragon (EL 14): A ken-sun has been born to a wandering ogre band and is being apprenticed, warily, by the group's ogre mage leader. The little tribe consists of a 4th-level ogre barbarian (*MM* 199), eight ogres (*MM* 199), the ogre mage (*MM* 200), and the ken-sun. If the band runs into any enemies, the ken-sun is eager to prove itself.

Elemental Mage Siege (EL 14): A ken-sun has descended from the mountains with its warband, including a ken-li and a ken-kuni, to lay siege to a city. The raiders quickly

ELEMENTAL MAGE LORE

Characters who have ranks in Knowledge (nature) can learn more about elemental magi. When a character makes a successful skill check, the following lore is revealed, including the information from lower DCs.

Knowledge (Nature)

DC	Result
20	This is one of the elemental magi, an interrelated group of giants who often form warbands. Elemental magi are descended from ogres, and they are like ogre mages.
25	Elemental magi come in three varieties. Ken-kunis are creatures of stone with the power to cause tremors. Ken-lis are fire-breathing monstrosities capable of great destruction. Ken-suns are natural leaders that have power over the air.
30	Elemental magi are strong and resilient, and they heal extremely quickly.

overran the inhabitants and firmly established a tyrannical regime.

To lead up to the climax, the PCs need to infiltrate the city or defeat the guards—several encounters of EL 10 or lower. A typical encounter contains seven ogres led by an ogre barbarian.

The climactic encounter is against all three elemental magi and takes place in the town square. Surrounded by low-lying buildings, the square is a perfect spot for concealed fighters to hide. If given warning of the characters' approach, the ken-sun and the other elemental magi hide inside various structures, waiting in ambush.

ECOLOGY

Elemental magi are born among ogres, and they are very rare. Speculated to be types of ogre mages, elemental magi are fascinated by their own peculiar abilities and tendencies from a very young age. The three kinds of magi seem made to fit together as an effective force. Some sages believe that the elemental magi were created by old gods to avenge the worship they lost to newer divinities.

No female elemental magi exist, but elemental magi and ogres can interbreed. Such unions do not necessarily produce more elemental magi. That gift is entirely random, not hereditary.

Environment: Elemental magi are most common in foothills and other highlands that support ogres and ogre mages. Ken-suns also ascend to higher elevations, taking to the peaks to isolate themselves as they scheme and gather their forces.

Typical Physical Characteristics: All elemental magi are of a similar size—10 to 12 feet tall—and all are horned. Beyond that, each is quite distinctive in look and in powers.

Ken-kunis are the shortest and broadest of the elemental magi. Their flesh is marbled gray. Each has two horns like those of a bull, and a third horn juts from the center of its forehead. Their dull features and powerful muscles are usually hidden under banded mail, and ken-kunis prefer helms that allow their horns to protrude.

Ken-lis are broad-shouldered and have massive chests. Their flesh is the color of burnished bronze, and two black horns curve backward, extending out of a red mane. Flames dart and whirl about them. Fire fills their lungs as well, which causes smoke to pour from their mouth and nostrils.

Ken-suns are the slimmest of the elemental magi and the tallest. A ken-sun's skin is blue-white in color, and a single great horn protrudes from the center of its forehead, measuring 2 to 3 feet in length. Hardened, bony flesh forms a carapacelike structure over the giant's entire body, giving it a rocky appearance. A ken-sun is typically clad in robes, which flap in the breeze created by the giant's powers.

Alignment: Elemental magi are usually evil, though each has a strong tendency to be of a specific alignment. Ken-kunis tend to be neutral evil, ken-lis chaotic evil, and ken-suns lawful evil.

SOCIETY

Ken-lis and ken-kunis are loners unless brought together by ken-suns. All elemental magi are the enemies of civilization and civilized peoples. Elemental magi seem born to a purpose, the ken-kunis and ken-lis being naturally subservient to the ken-suns. That purpose appears to be pure destruction.

Ken-suns impose only a little order on the territories they take control of—enough that their minions can be relied on to defend the area and enough that no one tries to usurp power. Otherwise, their followers are left to their own devices, remaining content.

TYPICAL TREASURE

All elemental magi have valuable gear. These trappings are not considered part of the giant's treasure when determining its other wealth. Elemental magi who have levels in character classes have equipment normal for NPCs of their Challenge Rating, but ken-suns usually have additional wealth to reward their followers.

Ken-kunis keep hoards in their lairs, the loot taken from those who pass through their territory. They take coins, but they prefer gems, sculptures, and other items of beauty or utility, which they can more easily trade. They have half coins, double goods, and half items.

Ken-lis have little use for treasure and almost never have any with them. A town a ken-li has laid to waste might still have some recoverable treasure among the ruins. Thus, a ken-li has half standard treasure.

Ken-suns use treasure as compensation for their followers, distributing magic items they find among their minions and keeping some for themselves. Most ken-suns have double standard treasure for their Challenge Rating.

When together in a warband, all three combine their talents and wealth, creating a greater hoard to supply and pay their followers. This hoard is often carried on an armored wagon along with the troops while they march. When the army takes over a town, the treasure is stored in the most secure building, as determined by the ken-sun.

ELEMENTAL MAGI WITH CLASS LEVELS

Elemental magi are warriors, despite their supernatural powers. They usually advance as fighters, though some advance in other martial classes. Ken-lis often become barbarians, while ken-suns favor leader roles that make classes such as the marshal (*Miniatures Handbook* 11) attractive. Only those classes that improve an elemental mage's base attack bonus by HD × 3/4 or better and have at least a d8 Hit Die are considered associated for an elemental mage.

Level Adjustment: +5.

EMBER GUARD

A hulking mass of stone and brass surges forward, puffs of acrid smoke leaking from its maw. Intense heat radiates from its surface, and smoke rises where it treads.

EMBER GUARD **CR 13**
Always LE Huge outsider (evil, extraplanar, fire, lawful)
Init +6; **Senses** darkvision 60 ft.; Listen +20, Spot +20
Aura fire (30 ft.); see text
Languages Infernal, Ignan

AC 33, touch 10, flat-footed 31; 25% fortification
(–2 size, +2 Dex, +23 natural)
hp 162 (13 HD); fast healing 5; **DR** 15/good; death throes
Immune fire, poison
Resist acid 10, cold 10; **SR** 23
Fort +18, **Ref** +12, **Will** +12
Weakness vulnerability to cold

Speed 30 ft. (6 squares)
Melee 2 slams +22 each (1d8+10 plus 1d6 fire)
Space 15 ft.; **Reach** 15 ft.
Base Atk +13; **Grp** +31
Atk Options aligned strike (evil, lawful)
Special Actions fire breath

Abilities Str 30, Dex 15, Con 26, Int 3, Wis 18, Cha 9
SA aligned strike, death throes, fire aura, fire breath
Feats Ability Focus (fire breath), Great Fortitude, Improved Initiative, Lightning Reflexes, Weapon Focus (slam)
Skills Balance +18, Climb +26, Listen +20, Spot +20
Advancement 14–26 HD (Huge)

Fire Aura (Su) If an ember guard is reduced to half of its full normal hit points or fewer, it emits a fire aura as flames start leaking from its body. Creatures take 1d6 points of fire damage at the end of each of the ember guard's turns if they are within 30 feet of it. Creatures within range can attempt DC 24 Fortitude saves for half damage. The save DC is Constitution-based.

Fortification (Ex) 25% chance to ignore the extra damage dealt by a critical hit or sneak attack.

Death Throes (Su) When killed, an ember guard explodes in a 60-foot-radius burst that deals 3d6 points of bludgeoning damage and 3d6 points of fire damage to everything in the area (Reflex DC 24 half). The save DC is Constitution-based.

Fire Breath (Su) 30-foot cone, once every 4 rounds, damage 6d6 fire plus *slow*, as the spell, for 4 rounds, Reflex DC 24 half. The save DC is Constitution-based.

Gifts of Imix, the Prince of Evil Fire Elementals, ember guards are dim-witted creatures of fathomless evil that spread the dark will of their master by serving the efreet and other evil fire creatures.

STRATEGIES AND TACTICS

Ember guards are typically minions of other creatures in the service of Imix, usually working with salamanders, fire giants, and efreet. Their purpose is to spread pain and suffering, so they gladly engage anyone they encounter. They start by spewing a cone of fire to *slow* their foes. Then, they wade into the thick of battle, swinging their fists to buy time until they can next use their breath.

SAMPLE ENCOUNTERS

Imix gives ember guards to his faithful servants. No creature would refuse such a gift, even though ember guards have little purpose outside of killing. Their masters are quick to bring them along on forays into other planes. Efreeti pashas employ ember guards as mercenaries and guardians, selling their services to other creatures in exchange for treasures and slaves.

Flamebrother's Keeper (EL 14): A flamebrother salamander (*MM* 219) has been prophesied to become a great sorcerer and spread evil across the world in a tide of flame. It is currently in a caravan traveling to a great temple on the Material Plane, where its magical potential can be unleashed.

When the PCs find the caravan, no trace of the flamebrother can be seen. Instead, an ember guard tramps forward in the middle of the caravan. Three average salamanders lead, and two more bring up the rear. The rest of the caravan is made up of fourteen cultists (all humanoid adept 1), who serve only as fodder.

The flamebrother is actually inside the ember guard, kept safe by its immunity to fire. The characters can either use divination to detect the salamander or simply find it once they defeat the ember guard.

Bortrax's Mercenaries (EL 18): A pit fiend named Bortrax made a pact with an efreeti pasha from the City of Brass to gain the service of five ember guards. Bortrax intends to send the pack to the Material Plane to take vengeance on a town that found and immolated several of his cultists.

The town is located in a river valley, so PCs who can lure the ember guards to the water (or stop them before they cross it) might gain an advantage by slowing them down and reducing the danger of their fire-based attacks.

EMBER GUARD LORE

Characters who have ranks in Knowledge (the planes) can learn more about ember guards. When a character makes a successful skill check, the following lore is revealed, including the information from lower DCs.

Knowledge (the Planes)

DC	Result
23	This is an ember guard, a creature from the Elemental Plane of Fire. An ember guard can breathe a cone of flame that magically slows those it burns. Cold is this creature's major weakness.
28	Ember guards are spawned by Imix, Prince of Evil Fire Elementals. Their essential nature—fire—lies trapped within a skin of brass and stone that is resilient against all but good weapons. Despite amazing healing abilities, ember guards lose their ability to contain their inner fire as they suffer injuries, causing those nearby to burn as heat and flame escape.
33	If an ember guard is slain, it explodes in a tremendous burst, showering the area with fiery cinders.

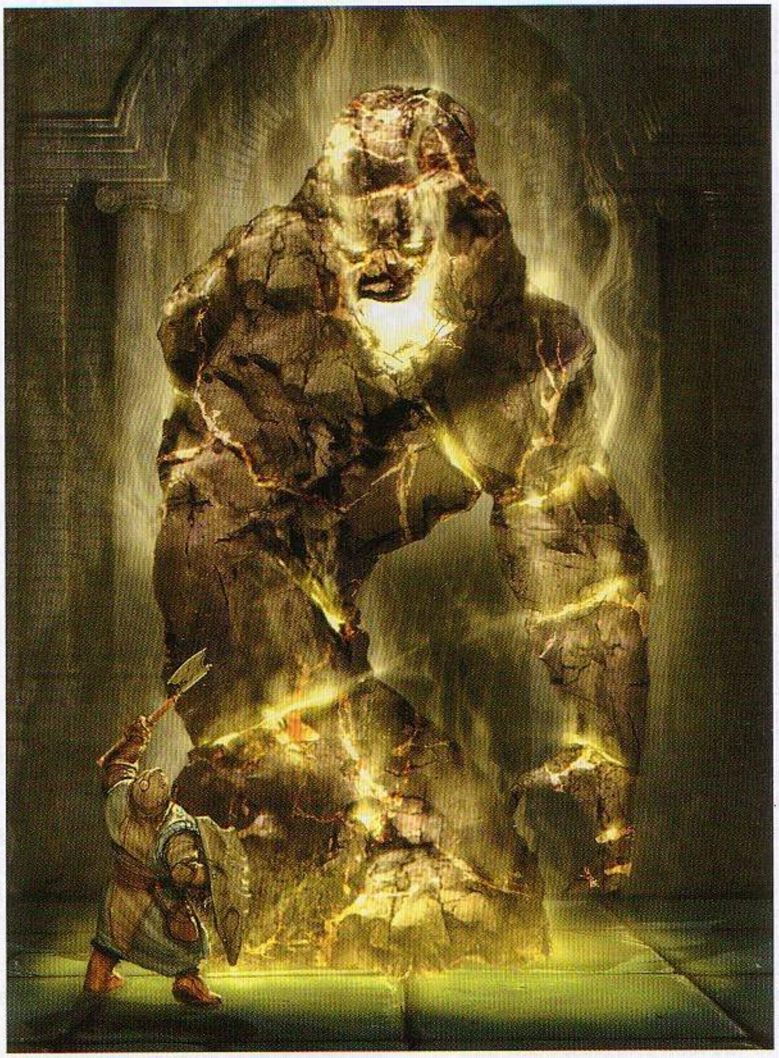
ECOLOGY

It is said that when a minion of Imix pleases his master, the Elemental Prince causes ember guards to rise from a lake of fire. Formed from the hottest flames and contained in a shell of brass and rock, they shuffle forward, eager to serve. They have no need for nourishment, nor do they truly have desires. Instead, they go where directed, venting the wickedness that burns hotly within them.

Environment: Ember guards are native to the Elemental Plane of Fire, where they can be found guarding the palaces of the mightiest nobles. They are seldom encountered elsewhere on the plane, though some bold planar travelers have claimed to spy legions of these creatures spawned from pockets of elemental earth that bob in the molten seas.

Typical Physical Characteristics: A typical ember guard stands 18 feet tall and weighs about four tons. Its rocky body is flecked with brassy deposits, looking very much like the body of a Huge earth elemental. The differences manifest themselves in the flames flickering in its eyes and maw, as well as the heat that escapes its body when it is wounded.

Alignment: Though only dimly intelligent, ember guards seethe with malevolence, as evidenced by the chortling noises they make when they slay their enemies. Ember guards are always lawful evil.



Ember guard

Illus. by A. Swekel

SOCIETY

Ember guards are flawlessly obedient, following just about any order from anyone or anything they see as a legitimate authority. They are as dense in mind as they are in body, but their nature and the circumstances of their birth give them evil inclinations and a desire to do harm. Nothing of camaraderie or companionship is known to them, though they eerily gather with others of their kind when directed along no other course of action.

TYPICAL TREASURE

At a glance, it seems veins of brass fleck an ember guard's hide. On closer inspection, it becomes obvious that this is not valuable material.

Ember guards do not collect treasure. Divide standard treasure of a monster that has the ember guard's Challenge Rating between treasure found on the ember guard's companions and its commander, and rewards from grateful people the PCs save from the creature.

EMBER GUARDS IN EBERRON

During the last century, when the seas of Fernia were coterminous with the Material Plane, a mad efreeti named Ayim broke free and led a force of ember guards to carve out a new kingdom in northern Xen'drik. The months that followed saw countless battles with neighboring drow, but eventually Ayim was defeated and his armies scattered.

Drow scouts claim that ember guards still haunt the islands of the Thunder Sea, awaiting the return of their master to lead them home. Little do these drow know that a fire giant wizard named Jyanta is gathering the ember guards for her own nefarious ends.

EMBER GUARDS IN FAERÛN

Spawned from the forges of Hammergrim, ember guards punish duergar who offend Deep Duerra. Vast catacombs lie beneath the Citadel of Thought, and from the bowels of the fiery tunnels, one can hear incredible screams of suffering rising above the rumbling laughter of ember guard torturers.

ETHEREAL DEFILER

A hulking abomination at least 10 feet tall steps out of a whirling maelstrom of black energy. Green and black scales cover the hunched monstrosity's bipedal body, which ripples with corded muscles. It has clawed hands and feet. A long snout that has two dangling tendrils caps the creature's lizardlike face, and a thick tail hangs behind it.

ETHEREAL DEFILER **CR 16**

Always CE Large aberration (extraplanar)

Init +10; **Senses** blindsense 60 ft., darkvision 60 ft.; Listen +12, Spot +12

Aura anchoring (20 ft.)

Languages Common, Undercommon; telepathy 100 ft.

AC 33, touch 17, flat-footed 27 (–1 size, +6 Dex, +2 deflection, +16 natural)

hp 253 (22 HD); **DR** 10/cold iron

Resist cold 20, fire 20; **SR** 29

Fort +14, **Ref** +13, **Will** +15

Speed 40 ft. (8 squares)

Melee 2 claws +24 each (1d8+8) and tail +18 (1d8+4) or

Melee claw +24 (1d8+8) and *tainted energy* claw +24 (1d8+8 plus 6d6) and tail +18 (1d8+4)

Ranged *tainted energy* +21 ranged touch (6d6)

Space 10 ft.; **Reach** 10 ft.

Base Atk +16; **Grp** +28

Atk Options Cleave, Far Shot, Point Blank Shot, Power Attack, Precise Shot

Special Actions ethereal bore

Abilities Str 27, Dex 22, Con 24, Int 6, Wis 14, Cha 16

SA anchoring aura, ethereal bore, tainted energy

Feats Cleave, Empower Spell-Like Ability (*tainted energy*), Far Shot, Improved Initiative, Point Blank Shot, Power Attack, Precise Shot, Weapon Focus (claws)

Skills Climb +13, Jump +12, Listen +12, Spot +12

Advancement by character class; **Favored Class** warlock; see text

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Anchoring Aura (Su) Effects that have the teleportation descriptor don't function within 20 feet of an ethereal defiler. Further, opponents must succeed on a DC 24 Will save to move more than 20 feet from the creature. The save DC is Charisma-based.

A creature that successfully saves need not save against that same ethereal defiler's anchoring aura for 24 hours. Other ethereal defilers are immune to this aura.

Tainted Energy (Sp) As a swift action, an ethereal defiler can fire a blast of eldritch energy as a ranged touch attack to a range of up to 120 feet. The blast deals 6d6 points of damage. An ethereal defiler can instead use that swift action to imbue a claw with eldritch energy, dealing an extra 6d6 points of damage if that claw attack hits. An opponent that takes damage from this energy must succeed on a DC 24 Fortitude save or be sickened for 1d4 rounds. Caster level 22nd. The save DC is Charisma-based.

Ethereal Bore (Su) Once every 10 rounds, an ethereal defiler can shift between the Ethereal Plane and the Material Plane as a full-round action that doesn't provoke attacks of opportunity. An ethereal defiler's arrival on the Material Plane is accompanied by an eruption of eldritch energy that deals 10d6 points of damage in a 20-foot-radius burst (Reflex DC 24 half) centered on the ethereal defiler. The burst doesn't harm the ethereal defiler that created it. This ability otherwise works like an *ethereal jaunt* spell (caster level 22nd). The save DC is Charisma-based.

Ethereal defilers are murderous predators that shift between the Material Plane and the Ethereal Plane in bursts of foul energy. Bulky and strong, ethereal defilers also have control over eldritch energy like that which a warlock commands.

STRATEGIES AND TACTICS

An ethereal defiler prowls the Ethereal Plane, seeking food and sport. From the Ethereal, it maneuvers among groups of foes, then uses its ethereal bore ability to emerge and catch as many as possible in the tainted energy burst that accompanies its shift. It follows up by targeting the foe that seems most injured with an empowered *tainted energy* claw or ray.

The ethereal defiler then focuses on brutally eliminating one foe at a time with its physical attacks. Recklessly, it uses its full Power Attack regularly, scaling back only after it realizes it can't hit with such vicious blows. It reserves empowered *tainted energy* attacks to use on blows it thinks might kill or disable an enemy. When it makes a *tainted energy* claw attack, it doesn't use Power Attack.

SAMPLE ENCOUNTER

Ethereal defilers prefer to live and hunt alone, though they can occasionally be found in pairs. They are rarely caught on the Material Plane unless they're attacking prey or eating, so almost every encounter with an ethereal defiler begins with an ambush by the creature. Ethereal defilers prefer to attack their foes in enclosed spaces.

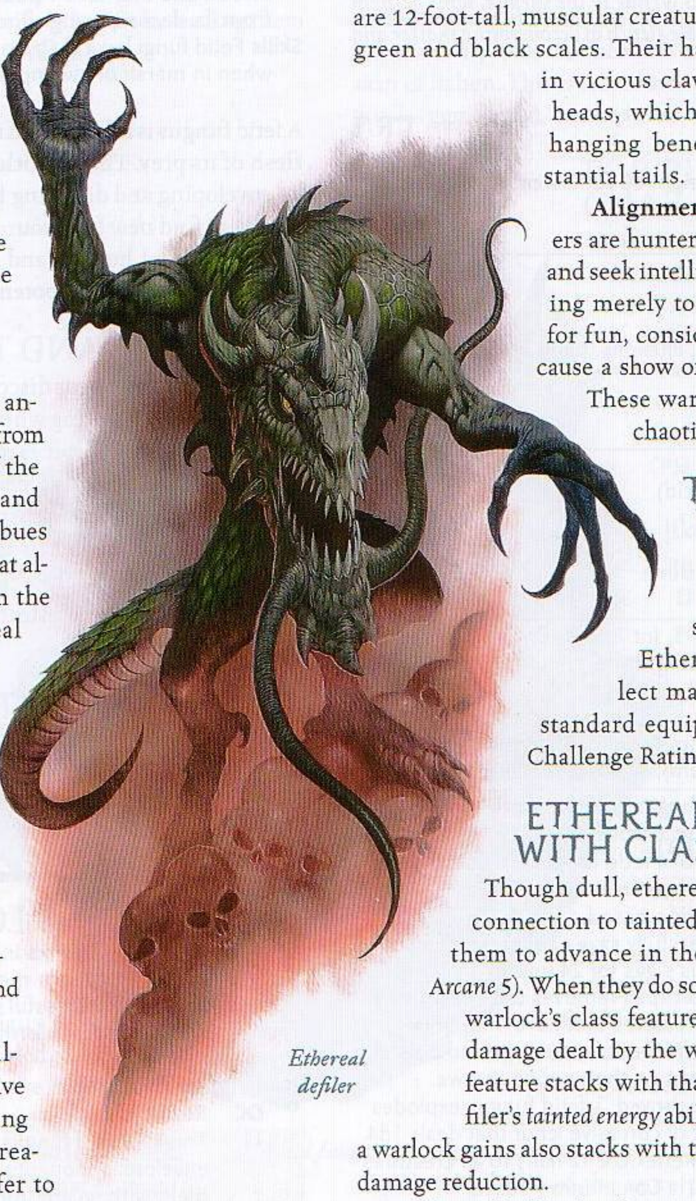
ETHEREAL DEFILER LORE

Characters who have ranks in Knowledge (dungeoneering) or Knowledge (the planes) can learn more about ethereal defilers. When a character makes a successful skill check, the following lore is revealed, including the information from lower DCs.

Knowledge (Dungeoneering) or Knowledge (the Planes)

DC	Result
26	This is an ethereal defiler, a corrupt extraplanar predator that travels between the Ethereal Plane and the Material Plane. It has powerful claws and a mighty tail.
31	When an ethereal defiler arrives on the Material Plane, it creates an explosion of eldritch energy. It uses that same energy to shoot potent rays or charge its claws.
36	Ethereal defilers emanate a field that prevents teleportation effects. That same field prevents even strong-willed creatures from leaving the ethereal defiler's immediate vicinity.

Portal Predator (EL 16): An ethereal defiler lies in wait on one side of a magic portal in the Underdark—a gate said to lead to centuries-old ruins. It preys on those who come to investigate the gateway, as well as creatures that pass through the surrounding caverns, which the defiler considers its territory. Several factions in the deep earth know that a dangerous creature stalks and kills those who come near the portal. More than one of them is willing to pay dearly to have that problem solved and the path to the portal cleared.



Ethereal defiler

ECOLOGY

Ethereal defilers belong to an ancient and rare race that comes from beyond the known realms of the Material Plane. Built to hunt and kill, their bizarre nature imbues them with corrupt energy that allows them to tunnel between the Material Plane and the Ethereal Plane. They use that same energy to slaughter their foes with blasts and devastating claw attacks.

It's likely that ethereal defilers are somehow related to ethereal filchers, ethereal marauders, and ethereal slayers (*MM2* 96), but ethereal defilers are altogether more purposeful and malevolent.

Not only are ethereal defilers carnivores, they also derive particular pleasure from slaying and devouring sentient creatures. Ethereal defilers prefer to prey on creatures that put up a good fight. They also enjoy cat-and-mouse games with their victims, reveling in inspiring terror beyond that experienced by mere animals.

Interaction between ethereal defilers is instinctually driven. They fight over territory, seeing others of their kind as rivals. Pairs of ethereal defilers come together briefly to mate, each laying dark eggs that the other fertilizes. Even mating is risky, since one ethereal defiler often slays the other as a convenient meal when mating is done.

Young ethereal defilers are born in explosions of eldritch energy. The strongest among the hatchlings slays and eats its siblings.

Environment: Ethereal defilers live primarily on the Ethereal Plane, appearing on the Material Plane only to feed. No climate deters them, though they prefer temperate areas that have ample prey.

Typical Physical Characteristics: Ethereal defilers are 12-foot-tall, muscular creatures covered with shining green and black scales. Their hands and feet are capped in vicious claws. They have lizardlike heads, which have two long tendrils hanging beneath the chin, and substantial tails.

Alignment: Although ethereal defilers are hunters, they are wantonly cruel and seek intelligent prey. Instead of hunting merely to eat, ethereal defilers kill for fun, considering the suffering they cause a show of cleverness and strength. These warped creatures are always chaotic evil.

TYPICAL TREASURE

Normal ethereal defilers have little use for treasure, so they collect none. Ethereal defiler warlocks collect magic items, and they have standard equipment for NPCs of their Challenge Rating, all in magic items.

ETHEREAL DEFILERS WITH CLASS LEVELS

Though dull, ethereal defilers have an innate connection to tainted magical energy, allowing them to advance in the warlock class (*Complete Arcane* 5). When they do so, they gain nearly all of the warlock's class features normally. However, the damage dealt by the warlock's *eldritch blast* class feature stacks with that dealt by the ethereal defiler's *tainted energy* ability. The damage reduction a warlock gains also stacks with the ethereal defiler's innate damage reduction.

An ethereal defiler that doesn't advance as a warlock usually advances as a barbarian, a fighter, or a rogue.

Level Adjustment: +4.

ETHEREAL DEFILERS IN EBERRON

Ethereal defilers are found throughout Eberron, though they are rare in civilized countries. In Khorvaire, ethereal defilers are most common in the Shadow Marches, where they are attracted to *dimensional seals* and weird overlapping manifest zones. Some suggest that the daelkyr created ethereal defilers from another creature native to the Ethereal Plane, and the druids of the Gatekeeper sect consider ethereal defilers among their worst enemies.

Illus. by W. England

FETID FUNGUS

An amorphous mass of colorful, lichen-crusted bubbles lumbers toward you. Its outer layer is mottled with bright red, amber, and flesh-colored blotches, and covered with a slick coat of leafy, hairlike stalks. As the bubbles writhe to the surface, some of them pop, releasing the unmistakable stench of decomposing matter and swamp gas.

FETID FUNGUS **CR 1**

Always N Medium plant
Init –1; **Senses** blind, blindsight 60 ft.; Listen +0
Aura sickening gas (30 ft.)
Languages —

AC 13, touch 9, flat-footed 13
(–1 Dex, +4 natural)
hp 12 (2 HD); death throes
Immune acid, gaze attacks, illusions, plant immunities, visual effects
Fort +4, **Ref** –1, **Will** +0
Weakness vulnerability to fire

Speed 20 ft. (4 squares)
Melee acid touch +1 (1d6 acid)
Space 5 ft.; **Reach** 5 ft.
Base Atk +1; **Grp** +1
Atk Options decomposing slime
Special Actions engulf

Abilities Str 11, Dex 8, Con 13, Int 1, Wis 10, Cha 5
SA death throes, decomposing slime, engulf, sickening gas
SQ plant traits
Feats Track
Skills Hide +2 (+12 in swampy terrain), Listen +0, Survival +2
Advancement 3 HD (Medium); 4–6 HD (Large)

Sickening Gas (Ex) A fetid fungus's amorphous body is filled with gases given off by decomposing matter. All living creatures within 30 feet of a fetid fungus must succeed on a DC 12 Fortitude save or be sickened for 10 rounds. The save DC is Constitution-based.

Creatures that successfully save cannot be affected by that same fetid fungus's gas for 24 hours. A *delay poison* or *neutralize poison* spell removes the effect from the sickened creature. Creatures that have immunity to poison are unaffected, and creatures resistant to poison receive their normal bonus on their saving throws.

Death Throes (Ex) When destroyed, a fetid fungus explodes in a 10-foot-radius burst of corrosive ichor that deals 1d4 points of acid damage (Reflex DC 12 half) to all creatures in the area. The save DC is Constitution-based.

Decomposing Slime (Ex) A fetid fungus's body produces a decomposing slime. Any creature that strikes or touches a fetid fungus with its body, or that grapples a fetid fungus, takes 1 point of acid damage. A creature takes damage from this ability only once per round.

Engulf (Ex) As a standard action, a fetid fungus can envelop creatures of its size or smaller, entrapping them within itself. The fungus simply moves into the opponent's space; any creature whose space it completely covers is subject to the engulf attack. A fungus cannot make a touch attack during a round in which it engulfs. It can engulf as many creatures as can fit in its space.

Opponents can make attacks of opportunity against the fungus, but if they do so, they are not entitled to a saving throw. Those who do not attempt attacks of opportunity must succeed on a DC 12 Reflex save or be engulfed. On a success, a creature moves aside or back (opponent's choice) to move out of the fungus's path. The save DC is Constitution-based.

Engulfed creatures are considered to be grappled within the fungus's body, they are subject to its touch attack, and they take 1 point of acid damage per round from its decomposing slime.

Skills Fetid fungi have a +10 racial bonus on Hide checks when in marsh or swamp terrain.

A fetid fungus is a foul lichen that feeds off the decomposing flesh of its prey. These rootless creatures gain sustenance by enveloping and digesting flesh, and therefore travel constantly to find new food sources. Though barely intelligent, they are skilled hunters and trackers. Once a fetid fungus latches onto the trail of potential prey, it is relentless.

STRATEGIES AND TACTICS

As soon as a fetid fungus discovers signs of prey, it tracks the potential meal, attacking when it senses a foe. A fetid fungus gravitates toward slower targets. At the first opportunity, it engulfs an opponent, defending itself with acid touch attacks while its decomposing slime digests the engulfed individual. If it finishes its meal—or the prey escapes—a fetid fungus immediately seeks another opponent to decompose. Fetid fungi never retreat, continuing to feed and attack until destroyed.

SAMPLE ENCOUNTER

Fetid fungi rarely congregate in large numbers unless cultivated by a more powerful creature. They can be found in pods of one to four members.

FETID FUNGUS LORE

Characters who have ranks in Knowledge (nature) or Knowledge (religion) can learn more about fetid fungi. When a character makes a successful skill check, the following lore is revealed, including the information from lower DCs.

Knowledge (Nature)

DC	Result
11	This is a fetid fungus, an aggressive plant that envelops opponents, smothering and digesting them with its amorphous body. This result reveals all plant traits.
16	A fetid fungus's stench is caused by decomposing matter and can sicken people. Fetid fungus gas is flammable, making the fungus extremely susceptible to fire attacks.
21	Fetid fungi spew acid when attacking, and they explode in a shower of acidic ichor when slain.

Knowledge (Religion)

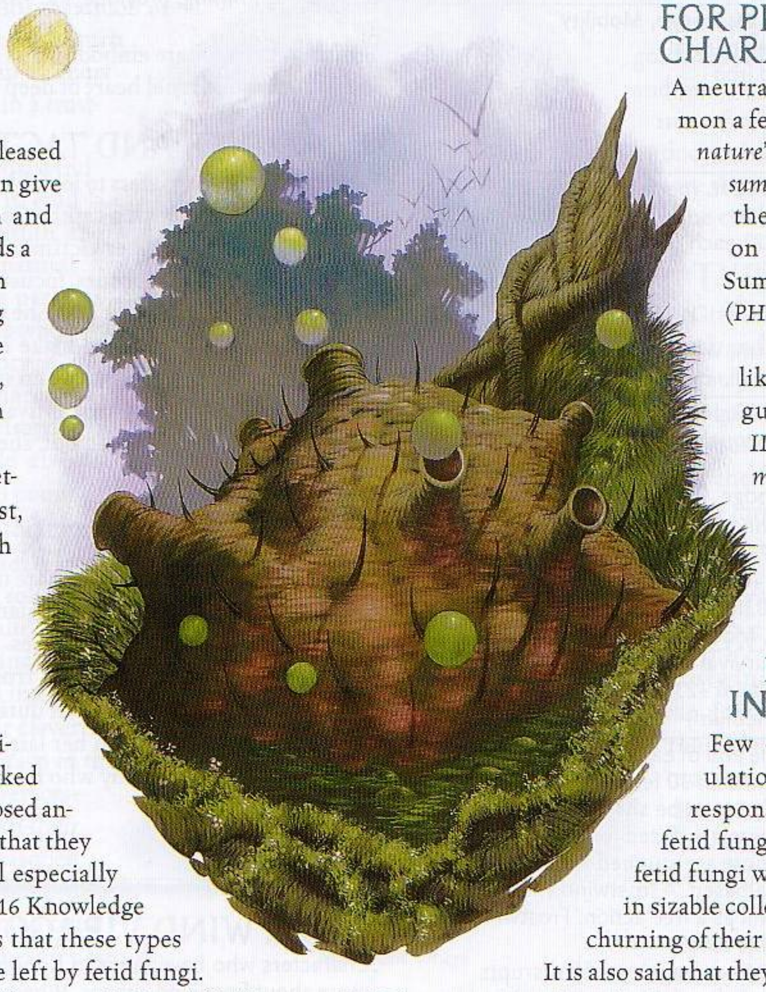
DC	Result
11	Evil druids sometimes summon fetid fungi.
16	Fetid fungi are sacred to worshipers of the demon Zuggtmoy, Lady of Fungi.
21	Some cults breed fetid fungi in large pits and use them in the performance of ritual sacrifices.

Swamp Surprise (EL 3): The PCs need to take a shortcut through a swamp. Halfway through, a druid named Alkarn (NE male half-elf druid 2) offers himself to the characters as a guide. Unknown to them, the druid believes he is the chosen of Zuggtmoy, the demonic Lady of Fungi, and at the first opportunity, he tries to sacrifice the PCs by leading them into a deep bog inhabited by a fetid fungus.

ECOLOGY

A fetid fungus is a predatory lichen colony that feeds by rapidly digesting living creatures. Gases and enzymes released through decomposition give the creature its form and help it move, so it needs a constant source of flesh to survive. The shifting gases allow it to move in a wallowing motion, rolling forward in an awkward undulation.

Environment: Fetid fungi live in moist, shadowy regions, such as caverns and forested marshes, bogs, swamps, as well as other places where death and decay are prevalent. Their territory is sometimes marked with partially decomposed animal bones, unique in that they are rubbery and smell especially foul. A successful DC 16 Knowledge (nature) check reveals that these types of skeletal remains are left by fetid fungi.



Fetid fungus

Illus. by W. England

Typical Physical Characteristics: A fetid fungus is a hairy plant creature that comes in hues from a pale flesh tone to red. Multiple colors are common on one specimen. The fungus seems to be a clump of bubbles, some of which occasionally pop. Beneath a fetid fungus's outer layer is a mass of putrid organic matter, which is a constant source of energy that releases the gases the fungus needs to move. These gases also make the fungus stink.

As a fungus consumes more matter, it continues to grow. Some reach the size of a large ox, but even these massive colonies weigh only 20 pounds. Eventually, the buildup of gases causes the creature to increase beyond a maintainable size. At this point, the fungus breaks apart into smaller colonies about the size of a small keg of wine, each weighing less than 5 pounds.

Alignment: Fetid fungi have no sense of morality, and they are therefore always neutral.

TYPICAL TREASURE

Fetid fungi don't value material objects and therefore do not deliberately acquire treasure. Large items are ejected as waste, but smaller pieces can become embedded in the creature's skin of lichen. This treasure amounts to standard coins and goods (gems only), but no items.

FOR PLAYER CHARACTERS

A neutral or evil druid can summon a fetid fungus using *summon nature's ally* II or a higher-level *summon nature's ally* spell. Treat the fetid fungus as if it were on the 2nd-level list on the Summon Nature's Ally table (PH 288).

A cleric of Zuggtmoy can likewise summon a fetid fungus using *summon monster* II or a higher-level *summon monster* spell. Treat the fetid fungus as if it were on the 2nd-level list on the Summon Monster table (PH 287).

FETID FUNGI IN EBERRON

Few doubt the popular speculation that the daelkyr are responsible for the creation of fetid fungi. Many daelkyr consider fetid fungi works of art and keep them in sizable collections. They find the slow churning of their amorphous forms relaxing. It is also said that they find the plants' sickening gas intoxicating.

Some of the more powerful daelkyr minions breed the fungus, hoping to earn their patron's favor. Fetid fungi have been traded as currency on more than one occasion. Lesser creatures, such as dolgaunts and dolgrims, sometimes attempt to cultivate the fungus by seeding the perimeter of their territories with corpses.

FETID FUNGI IN FAERÛN

Though they can be encountered in swamps and caverns, fetid fungi are most plentiful in Rethhild. Some theorize that fetid fungi are linked to the lost city there, though whether they contributed to the city's downfall or emerged as a result of the collapse is unknown. The lizardfolk king Ghassis has his druids cultivate these creatures in deep pits, where he throws the remains of his enemies to decompose.

FROSTWIND VIRAGO

A pale female with smooth, attractive features and glossy blue eyes, this creature is draped in a fur cloak. Despite the fact that flakes of frost dust her shoulders, face, and arms, she seems charming.

FROSTWIND VIRAGO **CR 16**

Usually NE Medium fey

Init +6; **Senses** low-light vision; Listen +30, Spot +30

Aura mind freeze (30 ft.)

Languages Auran, Common, Elven, Sylvan

AC 30, touch 24, flat-footed 24; Dodge, Mobility (+6 Dex, +8 deflection, +6 natural)

hp 285 (30 HD); **DR** 10/cold iron

Immune cold

SR 25

Fort +15, **Ref** +23, **Will** +22

Speed 30 ft. (6 squares); fly 60 ft. (perfect), swim 20 ft.; Flyby Attack, Spring Attack

Melee 2 frostbite touches +21 each (2d6+10 plus 2d6+10 cold)

Space 5 ft.; **Reach** 5 ft.

Base Atk +15; **Grp** +18

Atk Options Improved Disarm, Whirlwind Attack

Special Actions captivating call, icy vortex

Abilities Str 17, Dex 22, Con 20, Int 16, Wis 17, Cha 20

SA captivating call, frostbite touch, icy vortex, mind freeze aura

Feats Combat Expertise, Dodge, Flyby Attack, Improved Disarm, Improved Toughness, Iron Will, Mobility, Track, Spring Attack, Weapon Finesse, Whirlwind Attack

Skills Bluff +30, Diplomacy +30, Escape Artist +30, Hide +30, Intimidate +30, Move Silently +30, Knowledge (nature) +15, Listen +30, Move Silently +30, Sense Motive +30, Spot +30, Survival +30 (+32 in aboveground natural environments), Swim +23

Advancement 31–40 HD (Medium)

Mind Freeze Aura (Su) At the end of each of a frostwind virago's turns, creatures within 30 feet of her must succeed on a DC 30 Will save or be shaken for 1 round. Those who fail by 5 or more are dazed for 1 round, and those who fail by 10 or more are stunned for 1 round. The save DC is Charisma-based. A frostwind virago can suppress this ability at will as a free action. Frostwind viragos are immune to this aura.

Frostbite Touch (Su) A frostwind virago's touch disrupts matter and freezes it. Each die of damage is modified by the frostwind virago's Charisma bonus.

Captivating Call (Su) When a frostwind virago speaks and wills it to be so, all creatures (other than frostwind viragos) within a 300-foot-radius spread must succeed on a DC 30 Will save or become captivated. This is a language-based, sonic mind-affecting ability. A creature that successfully saves cannot be affected again by that same frostwind virago's call for 24 hours. The save DC is Charisma-based.

A captivated victim walks toward the frostwind virago, taking the most direct route available. If the path leads into a dangerous area, that opponent receives a second saving throw. Captivated foes can take no actions other than to avoid attack. A captivated victim within 5 feet of a frostwind virago stands there and offers no resistance to the fey's attacks. The effect continues for as long as the frostwind virago speaks and for 1d4 rounds thereafter. A bard's countersong ability allows a captivated victim to attempt a new Will save.

Icy Vortex (Su) A frostwind virago can produce a whirling mass of ice shards that lasts 1 round in a 30-foot radius around herself. Creatures in the area take 4d6 points of piercing damage plus 4d6 points of cold damage (Reflex DC 30 half). The save DC is Charisma-based.

Skills A frostwind virago has a +8 racial bonus on any Swim check to perform some special action or avoid a hazard. She can choose to take 10 on a Swim check, even if distracted or endangered. She can use the run action when swimming, provided she swims in a straight line.

Frostwind viragos are embodiments of the unforgiving and indiscriminately cruel heart of deep winter.

STRATEGIES AND TACTICS

A frostwind virago prefers to look like a fur-clad maiden and lure her victims in with a captivating call, suppressing her mind freeze aura until her victims are close by. The scheming fey then activates her aura, focusing her attacks on those who are not affected by her call. She uses Whirlwind Attack whenever this allows her to make more than two attacks, and she favors this technique when surrounded by enemies, even if those opponents are captivated, dazed, or stunned. If her adversaries are spread out, she uses her icy vortex to deal with them.

SAMPLE ENCOUNTER

Frostwind viragos are rare. They are usually found alone, but some ally themselves with frost giants or rule over weaker malevolent creatures in cold climes.

A Cold Welcome (EL 16): A frostwind virago lights a lantern at the top of her ice tower during mountain blizzards. The dark mountain path to her lair is treacherous, and she rewards with icy death any who make it to her door.

FROSTWIND VIRAGO LORE

Characters who have ranks in Knowledge (nature) can learn more about frostwind viragos. When a character makes a successful skill check, the following lore is revealed, including the information from lower DCs.

Knowledge (Nature)

DC	Result
26	This creature is a frostwind virago, a coldhearted fey that can captivate a creature just by speaking to it. Her touch chills to the bone.
31	A frostwind virago can daze and stun those who merely come near her. She can call forth a vortex of ice shards in a wide area around herself.
36	Cold cannot hurt frostwind viragos, and they are so cold that fire doesn't unduly harm them. They are highly resistant to spells, and only weapons made of cold iron can easily damage their icy forms.

ECOLOGY

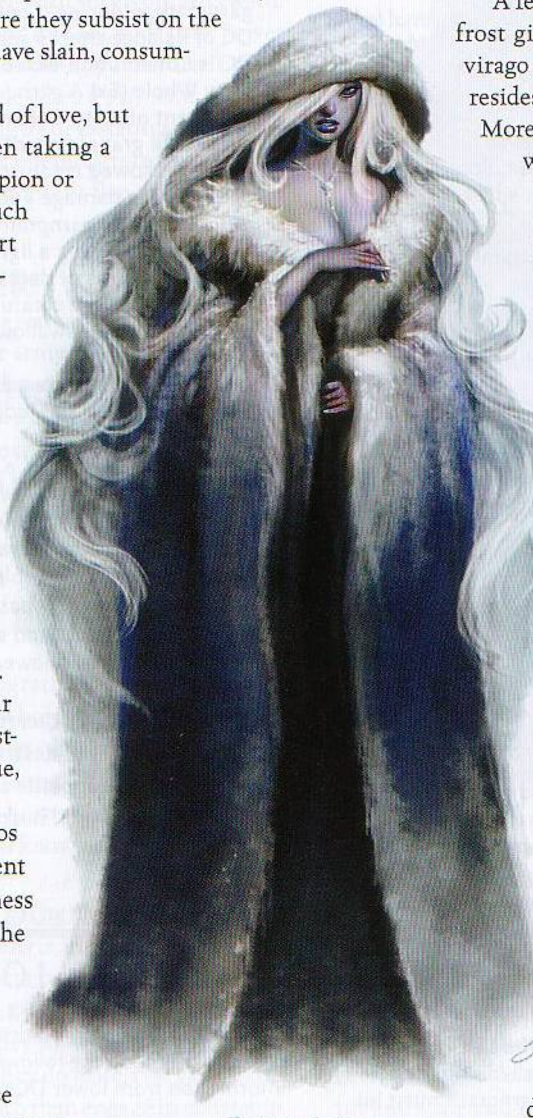
Frostwind viragos are imbued with the essence of bitter winter. Their blood is freezing to the touch and thick like molasses, and even their touch imparts a bitter chill. They live in remote cold locales, where they subsist on the frozen flesh of mammals they have slain, consuming snow and ice for water.

A frostwind virago is devoid of love, but she can experience desire, often taking a frost folk (*Frostburn* 130) champion or other humanoid as a lover in such cases. The relationship is short and stormy, resulting in a frostwind virago child.

Environment: Frostwind viragos prefer to live in cold mountains, usually within a carved cave of ice or a natural cavern overlooking a pass. The virago claims those who wander into her territory.

Typical Physical Characteristics: Frostwind viragos are the size of female elves, about 5 feet tall and 90 pounds. Their skin is pale, and their hair is blonde to stark white. A frostwind virago's eyes are solid blue, lacking any hint of white.

Alignment: Frostwind viragos despise warm-blooded intelligent creatures that use their cleverness to avoid the freezing grasp of the cold months. They are remorseless killers who toy with their prey, but they can be reasoned with, and they see the value of working toward a common cause with other creatures. These fey are usually neutral evil.



Frostwind virago

Illus. by J. Chan

SOCIETY

Frostwind viragos consider themselves the handmaidens of Auril (*Frostburn* 42), the sinister Frostmaiden of the frostfell. They desire nothing less than the domination of the world by ice. From their homes in the frozen wilderness, these fey act as lone and heartless agents of winter, hunting wanderers and ill-fated locals. Such frostwind viragos enjoy the hunt and the kill, but even they can be swayed by a humble offer of tribute.

Others of these fey set themselves up as monarchs in snow-covered lands, ruling over other creatures native to cold climes, including frost folk who revere the virago as semidivine. Within such malign courts, frostwind viragos scheme to control other lands. Their subjects carry out complex plots of destruction and misfortune constructed to show the implacable nature of the cold season.

A few frostwind viragos find a place among frost giants. The giants respect the frostwind virago as a mighty spirit of winter, and the fey resides among them as a protector and advisor. More than one frost giant monarch has a frostwind virago as a counselor.

Universal among frostwind viragos is their hatred for fey of temperate and warm climes. Such fey that wander into a frostwind virago's territory are doomed to prolonged suffering before they are allowed to succumb to the cold.

TYPICAL TREASURE

Given that their prey is humanoid, and that tribute is the only way to stay their icy hands, frostwind viragos amass quite a collection of treasure. They have standard treasure for their Challenge Rating, mostly in the form of goods and items taken from travelers.

FROSTWIND VIRAGOS IN EBERRON

Frostwind viragos can be found in the Icehorn Mountains north of the Eldeen Reaches, as well as the northern Ironroot Mountains of Karrnath and the Mror Holds. At least one of these malevolent fey lives in the Icewood of northern Karrnath, where she draws travelers toward the Madstone. The dwarves of the Mror Holds and the people of the mainland Lhazaar Principalities suffer the depredations of frostwind viragos in the Hoarfrost Mountains as well.

FROSTWIND VIRAGOS IN FAERÛN

Among the most feared creatures in the North, these handmaidens of Auril (*Faiths and Pantheons* 91) above) are found throughout Icewind Dale and the lands of the Frozenfar. Frostwind viragos prefer to live in the treacherous reaches of the Spine of the World. Though some frostwind viragos have been seen as far south as the Sword Coast during the winter, they prefer to stay well to the north, preying on the folk of the Savage Frontier.

GARNGRATH

Atop this monster's reptilian snout, an enormous horn of sparkling crystal scatters beams of multicolored light. Below that is a gaping maw full of crystalline teeth. The hulking monstrosity's black fur shifts unnaturally, and a shimmering haze shrouds its colossal form. Its six legs end in jagged claws of crystal.

GARNGRATH **CR 20**

Always CE Colossal magical beast (extraplanar)
Init +5; **Senses** darkvision 120 ft.; Listen +14, Spot +14
Languages understands Common; cannot speak

AC 38, touch 18, flat-footed 37
(–8 size, +1 Dex, +15 deflection, +20 natural); dimensional shield
Miss Chance 20% (dimensional shield)
hp 462 (28 HD); **DR** 15/epic
Immune ability damage, electricity, energy drain, fire, illusions, insanity, sonic
Resist acid 20, cold 20; **SR** 33
Fort +29, **Ref** +19, **Will** +15

Speed 80 ft. (16 squares), burrow 60 ft.; Run
Melee bite +33 (6d6+28)
Space 30 ft.; **Reach** 20 ft.
Base Atk +28; **Grp** +56
Atk Options Awesome Blow, Improved Bull Rush, Power Attack, Snatch, epic strike, improved grab
Special Actions *crystal horn,* devastating roar, swallow whole, swallowing charge
Spell-Like Abilities (CL 20th):
1/day—*plane shift* (self only)

Abilities Str 48, Dex 12, Con 32, Int 6, Wis 18, Cha 12
SA *crystal horn,* devastating roar, improved grab, spell-like abilities, swallow whole, swallowing charge
Feats Awesome Blow, Great Fortitude, Improved Bull Rush, Improved Initiative, Iron Will, Lightning Reflexes, Power Attack, Run, Snatch, Weapon Focus (bite)
Skills Listen +14, Spot +14, Survival +15
Advancement 29–40 HD (Colossal)

Dimensional Shield (Su) A garngrath is shrouded by a field of extraplanar energy, granting the beast its deflection bonus to AC and miss chance. Once per day, the shield can be focused to generate the garngrath's spell-like ability.

Improved Grab (Ex) To use this ability, a garngrath must hit an opponent with its bite. It can then attempt to start a grapple as a free action without provoking attacks of opportunity.

Crystal Horn (Sp) As a swift action, a garngrath can use its horn to generate a *prismatic spray,* as the spell—roll 1d8 on the table below. Caster level 20th. The save DCs are Wisdom-based.

1d8	Color	Effect
1	Red	20 points fire damage (Reflex DC 21 half)
2	Orange	40 points acid damage (Reflex DC 21 half)
3	Yellow	80 points electricity damage (Reflex DC 21 half)
4	Green	Poison (Kills; Fortitude DC 21 to take 1d6 points of Con damage instead)
5	Blue	Turned to stone (Fortitude DC 21 negates)
6	Indigo	Insane, as *insanity* spell (Will DC 21 negates)
7	Violet	Sent to another plane (Will DC 21 negates)
8	Struck by two rays; roll twice more, ignoring any "8" results	

Devastating Roar (Ex) As a full-round action, a garngrath can unleash a roar of such ferocity that it damages creatures and structures. The roar deals 20d6 points of sonic damage in a 60-foot-radius spread (Reflex DC 35 half). In addition, this roar levels all terrain adjacent to the garngrath, reducing it to light rubble and increasing the DC of Balance checks and Tumble checks by 2. The save DC is Constitution-based.

Swallow Whole (Ex) A garngrath can swallow a grappled opponent of up to Gargantuan size by making a successful grapple check.

A swallowed creature takes 6d6 points of bludgeoning damage and 6d6 points of acid damage per round from the garngrath's gizzard. The creature can cut its way out by using a light slashing or piercing weapon to deal 50 points of damage to the gizzard (AC 23; DR 15/epic). Once the creature exits, muscular action closes the hole; another swallowed opponent must cut its own way out.

A garngrath's gizzard can hold 2 Gargantuan, 8 Huge, 32 Large, 128 Medium, or 512 Small or smaller opponents.

Swallowing Charge (Ex) As a full-round action, a garngrath can open its crushing jaws, lay its gaping maw upon the ground, and rush forward 80 feet, swallowing everything in its path. Every creature in its 30-foot-wide path must make a grapple check as if being swallowed whole or immediately pass into the garngrath's gizzard. Unattended objects and structures of Gargantuan or smaller size are swallowed as well.

Garngraths are titanic creatures created by Erythnul as ever-hungering engines of destruction. A garngrath's incredible might and brutish appetite are complemented by the terrifying power of its crystal horn.

GARNGRATH LORE

Characters who have ranks in Knowledge (the planes) can learn more about garngraths. When a character makes a successful skill check, the following lore is revealed, including the information from lower DCs.

Knowledge (the Planes)

DC	Result
30	This is a garngrath, a destructive magical beast from Pandemonium. On that plane, garngraths are apex predators capable of swallowing several creatures in one gulp. In fact, a garngrath can charge headlong, swallowing all in its path.
35	The horn on a garngrath's head can rapidly emit *prismatic rays.* Its hide is shrouded in extraplanar energy that makes it hard to hit. It is highly resistant to acid and cold, and it's immune to ability damage, electricity, energy drain, fire, illusions, insanity, and sonic damage.
40	A garngrath is resistant to spells of all sorts, and only epic weapons can effectively harm it. It can unleash a devastating roar capable of rendering the ground to rubble when it's threatened. If the beast is slain, its horn can be claimed as a potent prize.

STRATEGIES AND TACTICS

When a garngrath spots prey, it burrows toward its quarry and erupts from the ground nearby. It then uses its swallowing charge, wading into melee with survivors afterward. Its only goal is to slay and devour its foes, so it uses Power Attack liberally and tries to swallow any creature it manages to grab. Every round it unleashes a *prismatic spray.* A garngrath favors melee over using its devastating roar unless it plans to retreat. If dangerous enemies remain after the ear-splitting bellow, a garngrath might flee using its *plane shift* ability.

SAMPLE ENCOUNTER

Garngraths appear in numbers greater than one only when they precede a great extraplanar army.

Slaughter Cometh (EL 20): It approaches on the horizon—a great garngrath unleashed by an extraplanar entity bent on the destruction of the PCs' entire civilization. The voracious monstrosity has already reduced three cities to rubble, and the characters' haven is next. Unless the characters slay the garngrath, thousands will perish before its otherworldly gluttony.

ECOLOGY

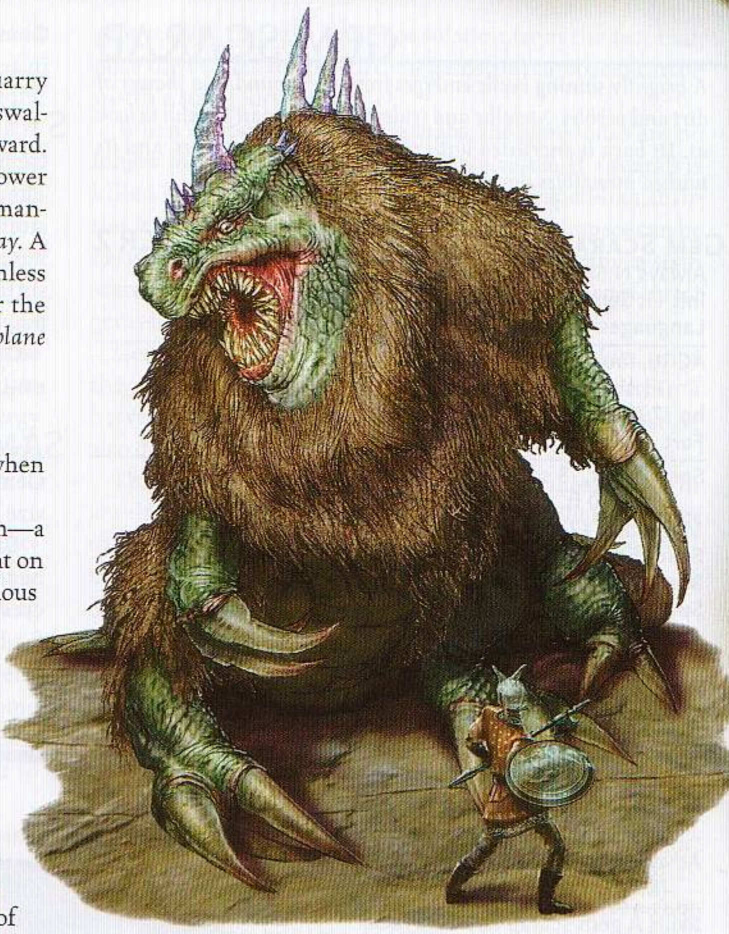
Erythnul created the first garngraths to accompany and amuse him, attaching crystal horns to them to add to the mayhem. He purposefully let some garngraths slip into the wilds of Pandemonium, along with the mystery of crafting and grafting the crystal horns. Extremely powerful extraplanar entities have used this knowledge and garngraths in warfare since then.

When Erythnul created the garngraths, he made them to withstand Pandemonium's environment as the plane's ultimate predators. These beasts can eat and digest any matter that doesn't kill them first. They burrow by chewing, tunneling by eating whatever they move through.

Garngraths are rare. Though they do mate, two garngraths are more likely to fight to the death than engage in courtship. The victor slaughters and consumes the loser. Even garngrath young are killed by their mothers if they do not burrow into the ground soon after being born.

Young garngraths are born Gargantuan and grow to adult size within a matter of weeks during a flurry of unabated feeding. After a garngrath reaches Colossal size, its metabolism churns at an amazing rate. Garngraths rarely live to see 30 years of life, however, aging rapidly due to this consumptive vitality.

Environment: Garngraths are native to the Windswept Depths of Pandemonium. They burrow into the mass of matter that makes up the plane's ground, adding to the innumerable tunnels therein. The garngraths' ability to *plane shift* means they can be found just about anywhere, but few garngraths use this ability to leave Pandemonium. The beasts must be trained to go to other planes, except when fleeing a losing battle.



Garngrath

Illus. by A. Swekel

Typical Physical Characteristics: A typical garngrath is 70 feet long, 20 feet tall, and weighs more than fifty tons. Shaggy black fur covers its body in dreadlocked tendrils. The air around a garngrath shifts and roils under the sway of its dimensional shield, giving its hide an unnatural appearance as though its fur and skin possessed a life of their own. Six muscular legs concealed beneath patches of fur and scale end in claws of a mineral composition similar to quartz, but far stronger. The creature's oversized reptilian head is crowned with an enormous horn of shining prismatic crystal and ringed in a long mane of black fur. Rows of teeth in its maw resemble jagged pieces of glass jutting in all directions.

Alignment: Garngraths revel in wanton butchery and massive destruction. They are always chaotic evil.

TYPICAL TREASURE

A garngrath leaves nothing in its wake, and it digests whatever it swallows. But if a garngrath is slain, its horn falls off and can be retrieved. If this is done, the horn immediately fixes itself to the head of the creature that retrieved it, resizing to match the skull of its new owner (Fortitude DC 35 negates). The horn then acts as a *helm of brilliance,* falling as powder from the new owner's skull when its last "jewel" is depleted.

GEM SCARAB

A brightly shining beetle emerges from the ground in a shower of dirt and pebbles. Metallic and iridescent, it's almost painful to look at. Its back is encrusted with what look like gemstones, and its wicked mandibles clack menacingly.

GEM SCARAB CR 2

Always N Small magical beast
Init +1; **Senses** tremorsense 30 ft.; Listen +6, Spot +4
Languages —

AC 16, touch 11, flat-footed 16
(+1 size, +5 natural)
hp 17 (2 HD)
Fort +6, **Ref** +3, **Will** +2

Speed 40 ft. (8 squares), fly 60 ft. (average), burrow 15 ft., climb 10 ft.
Melee bite +2 (1d4–1)
Space 5 ft.; **Reach** 5 ft.
Base Atk +2; **Grp** –3
Spell-Like Abilities (CL 2nd):
Diamond scarab: 6/day—*flare* (DC 14)
Emerald scarab: 6/day—*acid splash* (+3 ranged touch)
Sapphire scarab: 6/day—*ray of frost* (+3 ranged touch)

Abilities Str 9, Dex 10, Con 16, Int 1, Wis 15, Cha 10
SA spell-like abilities
Feats Alertness
Skills Climb +9, Hide +7 (+15 in sand), Listen +6, Spot +4
Advancement 3–4 HD (Small); 5–6 HD (Medium)

Skills A gem scarab has a +8 racial bonus on Hide checks in sand. It has a +10 racial bonus on Climb checks and can always choose to take 10 on Climb checks, even if rushed or threatened.

Gem scarabs are burrowing, insectlike creatures that dwell in arid and sandy lands.

STRATEGIES AND TACTICS

Gem scarabs form subterranean packs and attack as a group. They launch their ambush from the soil beneath their target, attempting to deal as much damage as possible in the first moments to maximize the advantage of surprise. If this is not sufficient to bring down their prey, they use their gemstone powers to dazzle or kill their opponents.

Gem scarabs are tenacious, refusing to give up the fight until they are all killed.

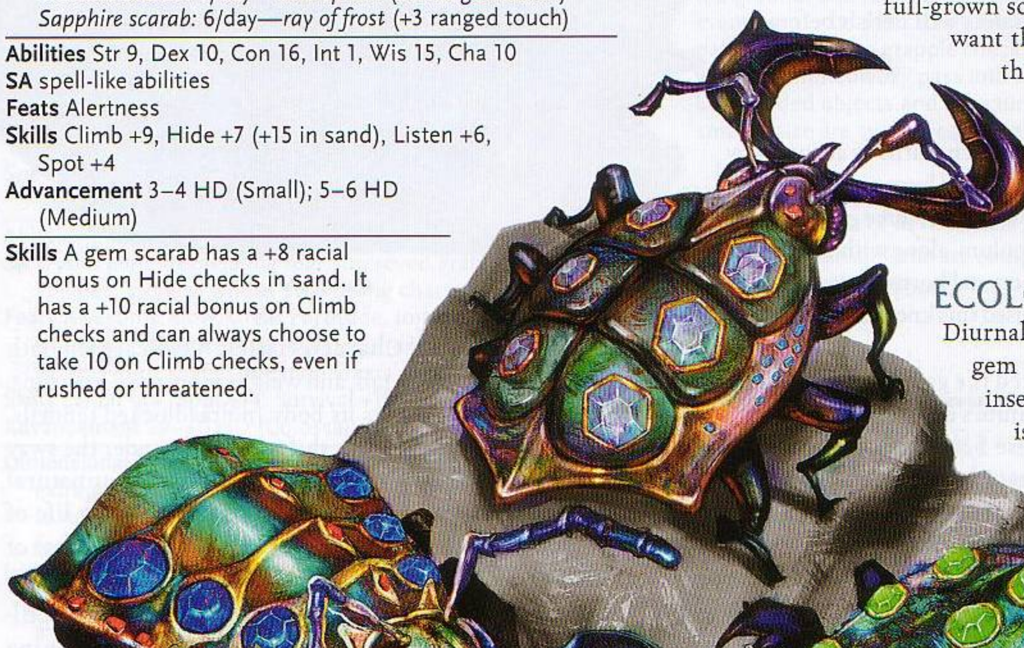
SAMPLE ENCOUNTER

Gem scarabs live and hunt in packs. These groups range in size from two to ten scarabs.

Grazing Ground (EL 5): A small colony of gem scarabs has set up a nest at the edge of a grazing area, and the creatures have begun terrorizing the local peasants who feed and water their animals there. The nest contains three full-grown scarabs, and the peasants want them gone. As a reward, the locals offer a masterwork sword that belonged to a wise adventurer who saved the people in this area long ago.

ECOLOGY

Diurnal, insectlike predators, gem scarabs are not truly insects. Their peculiar nature is known to desert folk. Such people dislike



Gem scarabs

Illus. by R. Spears

gem scarabs, because the beetles eat valuable minerals and rob the soil of nutrients, ruining it for farming.

Gem scarabs spend part of their time in tunnels, burrowing through the grit in search of minerals to digest and add to their carapaces. They also prey on living creatures, sentient or not, for meat. With an uncanny ability to find valuable minerals, gem scarabs attack trade convoys or wandering merchants, from which they can acquire both of the types of food they crave.

The minerals a gem scarab eats go into its carapace and gemlike growths on that shell. Within the largest of these crystalline structures, a gem scarab stores magical energy to power its spell-like abilities. When a scarab uses the energy stored within a gem, that gem crumbles to dust and the beetle sheds it. Other gems on the scarab become big enough to hold more energy for the creature within a day.

Environment: Gem scarabs prefer to live in hot, dry, dusty climates, typically deserts and parched scrublands. They have also been known to settle in fringes of grasslands during the summer.

They dig their burrows near water holes, oases, rivers, and other places where animals are likely to pass. Some learn the routes and trails where people take their animals to market, and such scarabs burrow beneath the road to await their next meal.

Typical Physical Characteristics: Gem scarabs come in a wide variety of hues and have an equally wide variety of gemstones upon their backs. Each scarab has six fully formed stones.

A gem scarab's carapace can be silver, gold, copper, or any other metallic sheen, often subtly shifting in color from one end of the beetle to the other. Upon their wing cases grow encrustations of what appear to be gemstones—crystallized minerals that are as radiant and lovely as any jewel.

Normal gem scarabs are 2 feet in length, with six barbed legs and fierce mandibles that are adapted to breaking up minerals. This adaptation also makes the mandibles suitable for hurting animals and people.

Alignment: Gem scarabs are almost instinctual, operating with no regard for morality. They are always neutral.

TYPICAL TREASURE

Gem scarabs don't collect treasure—they eat it. Those whose treasure hoards have been nibbled at by an infestation of gem scarabs can take some consolation from the fact that, once the beetles are killed, their gems and carapaces can be worth a small fortune.

NEW GEM SCARABS

Gem scarabs can come in other varieties. Just about any cantrip or orison is acceptable as a spell-like ability for a particular gem scarab. For example, a topaz scarab might have *cure minor wounds* as its spell-like ability, while an onyx scarab could have *inflict minor wounds.*

When removed from slain scarabs, the gemstones are no longer magical, but they retain some value. If a scarab is killed before it uses its daily allotment of spell-like abilities, the remaining fully formed gems on its carapace can be harvested and are worth 100 gp each. For each time a slain scarab used its spell-like ability, reduce the number of intact gems by one.

Gems removed from living scarabs crumble to dust, since the creature immediately transfers the energy within a harvested gem to another one on its back. Such harvesting also deals the scarab 1 point of damage.

The metallic carapaces of gem scarabs are valued for use in jewelry, inks, makeup, and dye. A few desert folk know how to make the carapace into thread as well, replacing actual metallic thread. Each slain scarab has enough undamaged carapace left to sell for 1–100 gp.

When gem scarabs catch sentient creatures, they eat all minerals of a nonmagical nature along with the flesh. Other items might remain at the site.

All these possibilities work together to give a gem scarab standard treasure for its Challenge Rating.

FOR PLAYER CHARACTERS

A gem scarab can be acquired as an improved familiar (*DMG* 200). A spellcaster of any alignment can have a gem scarab familiar, but that character must have an arcane spellcaster level of 5th and the Improved Familiar feat. The gem scarab's master can select the 0-level spell the familiar uses as its spell-like ability before summoning the creature, but that choice cannot be changed after the familiar is summoned.

GEM SCARAB LORE

Characters who have ranks in Knowledge (nature) can learn more about gem scarabs. When a character makes a successful skill check, the following lore is revealed, including the information from lower DCs.

Knowledge (Nature)

DC	Result
12	This insectlike creature is a gem scarab, a vicious desert predator. This result reveals all magical beast traits.
17	Gem scarabs dig their burrows near water holes or on paths that animals or people are likely to tread. Their carapaces can be worth a good deal of money.
22	Gem scarabs are encrusted with gemstones that allow them to power magical attacks. These gems can be valuable if harvested from a slain scarab.

GOD-BLOODED CREATURE

When a deity, its avatar, or its aspect appears on the Material Plane, any blood it sheds retains part of its divine essence. Gathered in sufficient quantities, this blood can be used to bathe as part of a special ritual, creating a god-blooded creature.

NOZGÛG, GRUUMSH-BLOODED ORC

A web of blackened veins pulse across this orc's rippling muscles, his left eye a scarred socket. As he lifts a great spear above his head, he unleashes a piercing war cry.

NOZGÛG (RAGING) CR 8

Male Gruumsh-blooded orc barbarian 5/fighter 2
CE Medium humanoid
Init +5; **Senses** darkvision 60 ft.; Listen +4, Spot +0
Languages Common, Orc

AC 14, touch 9, flat-footed 14; 25% fortification, improved uncanny dodge
(+1 Dex, +4 armor, +1 natural, –2 raging)
hp 84 (7 HD); divine endurance
Fort +11, **Ref** +2, **Will** +3

Speed 30 ft. (6 squares) in hide armor, base speed 40 ft.
Melee *+1 spear* +16/+11 (1d8+11/×3)
Ranged javelin +8/+3 (1d6+7)
Base Atk +7; **Grp** +14
Atk Options Cleave, Power Attack, rage 2/day (7 rounds)
Special Actions Gruumsh's fury, Gruumsh's glare
Combat Gear *potion of blur, potion of jump*

Abilities Str 24, Dex 13, Con 18, Int 6, Wis 10, Cha 8
SQ trap sense +1
Feats Cleave^{B}, Improved Initiative, Improved Toughness, Power Attack^{B}, Weapon Focus (spear)
Skills Climb +9, Jump +9, Intimidate +3, Listen +4, Spot +0, Swim +5
Possessions combat gear plus *+1 hide armor of light fortification, +1 spear,* 6 javelins, *amulet of natural armor +1* (shaped like a symbol of Gruumsh)

Fortification (Ex) 25% chance to ignore the additional damage dealt by a critical hit or sneak attack. This benefit comes from Nozgûg's armor.
Divine Endurance (Su) Nozgûg can take a free action to gain damage reduction 10/—. He can suppress this ability with another free action. Once the damage reduction has prevented 40 points of damage, Nozgûg loses all benefits of the god-blooded template, including this ability.
Gruumsh's Fury (Su) Once per day, as a swift action, Nozgûg can draw upon the power of the divine blood within his body to gain a +4 bonus (+8 against elves) on melee damage rolls for the rest of his turn.
Gruumsh's Glare (Su) Once per day, Nozgûg can cause a baleful, glowing red eye to appear in his empty eye socket. The eye creates a 60-foot cone of red energy. All creatures in this area must succeed on a DC 17 Fortitude save or be paralyzed for 1 round. Elves take a –4 penalty on this save. The save DC is Constitution-based.

When not raging, Nozgûg has the following changed statistics:
AC 16, touch 11, flat-footed 16
hp 70
Fort +9, **Will** +1
Melee *+1 spear* +14/+9 (1d8+8/×3)
Ranged javelin +8/+3 (1d6+5)
Grp +12
Abilities Str 20, Con 14
Skills Climb +7, Jump +7, Swim +3
Gruumsh's Glare (Su) DC 15

Nozgûg is an independent raider covered in glory—a paragon among his people. He had the following ability scores before Hit Dice and racial ability score adjustments: Str 15, Dex 13, Con 14, Int 8, Wis 12, Cha 10.

Strategies and Tactics

Nozgûg has only two purposes in life—to slay and to pillage. He uses his Gruumsh's glare ability to paralyze his enemies, then charges in to murder a helpless foe. Gruumsh's fury he reserves for a worthy enemy or an elf. Wishing to keep his divine talents, he activates his divine endurance only if he thinks he might lose the fight otherwise.

Sample Encounters

Becoming god-blooded is invariably a great honor, and god-blooded creatures serve as warlords and champions. Sites where creatures can acquire the god-blooded template are protected fiercely.

Nozgûg's Raiders (EL 9): Nozgûg raids accompanied by an orc berserker (*MM4* 114), an orc war howler (*MM4* 114), and six orc warriors (*MM* 203). His warriors provide flanks and sometimes use the aid another action to give Nozgûg more of an advantage. The berserker wades in independently, and the war howler provides support. Nozgûg focuses his attacks on elves, moving to other targets only after all elves are slain.

Neversleep Citadel (EL 9+ per encounter): High in the Altan Tepes Mountains, an ancient order of orc priests watches over a bubbling cauldron filled with blood spilled by Gruumsh. According to legend, Gruumsh bled on this spot when Corellon cut the orc god's eye from its socket. The clerics allow orc champions who perform great deeds in Gruumsh's name and can make it to the cauldron to bathe within, granting them a measure of the god's power. Nozgûg is one such champion, and the citadel is now his home.

The citadel protecting the cauldron houses a small army of orc barbarians, fighters, and clerics. Some of these are half-dragons. A young adult red dragon protects the place due to an ancient pact between Gruumsh and Tiamat. This dragon leaves and is replaced by another when it reaches adulthood.

CREATING A GOD-BLOODED CREATURE

"God-blooded" is an acquired template that can be added to a creature (referred to hereafter as the base creature) favored by the deity in question, as defined in the specific deity entries.

Challenge Rating: Same as the base creature +1.

Special Actions: The base creature gains the following special action.

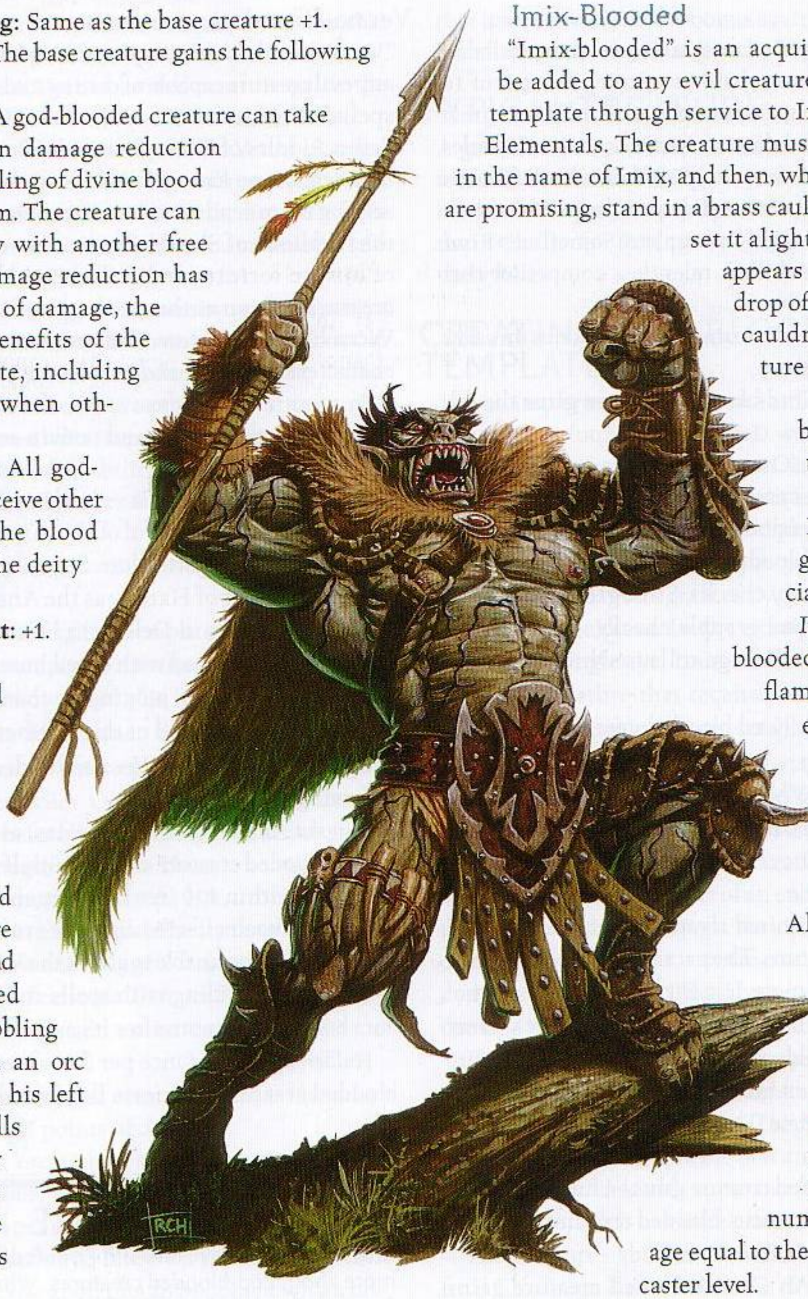
Divine Endurance: A god-blooded creature can take a free action to gain damage reduction 10/— from the mingling of divine blood with its material form. The creature can suppress this ability with another free action. Once the damage reduction has prevented 40 points of damage, the creature loses all benefits of the god-blooded template, including this ability, except when otherwise noted.

Other Abilities: All god-blooded creatures receive other abilities based on the blood they bathe in. See the deity entries below.

Level Adjustment: +1.

Gruumsh-Blooded

"Gruumsh-blooded" is an acquired template that can be added to any orc. Gruumsh-blooded orcs are typically created at unholy sites, where clerics of Gruumsh tend iron cauldrons filled with their god's bubbling green blood. When an orc bathes in the blood, his left eye shrivels and falls out, leaving an empty socket. The eye doesn't regrow even if the orc subsequently loses this template.



Nozgûg, Gruumsh-blooded orc

Special Actions: A Gruumsh-blooded orc gains the following special actions.

Gruumsh's Glare (Su): Once per day, a Gruumsh-blooded orc can cause a baleful, glowing red eye to appear in his empty eye socket. The eye creates a 60-foot cone of red energy. All creatures in this area must succeed on Fortitude saves (DC 10 + 1/2 the orc's HD + his Con modifier) or be paralyzed for 1 round. Elves take a –4 penalty on this save.

Gruumsh's Fury (Su): Once per day, as a swift action, a Gruumsh-blooded orc can draw upon the power of the divine blood within his body to gain a +4 bonus (+8 against elves) on damage rolls for the rest of his turn.

Imix-Blooded

"Imix-blooded" is an acquired template that can be added to any evil creature. A creature gains this template through service to Imix, Prince of Evil Fire Elementals. The creature must perform a great deed in the name of Imix, and then, when the signs and omens are promising, stand in a brass cauldron filled with oil and set it alight. If Imix is pleased, he appears and squeezes a single drop of his fiery blood into the cauldron, granting the creature this template.

Subtype: An Imix-blooded creature gains the fire subtype.

Special Actions: An Imix-blooded creature gains the following special action.

Imix's Wrath (Su): An Imix-blooded creature is wreathed in flames that don't harm its equipment. Once per day, as a swift action, an Imix-blooded creature can cause fire to flow from its body over its weapons. All the creature's melee attacks deal an extra 4 points of fire damage until the end of its turn. If an Imix-blooded creature casts a fire spell while affected by this quality, that spell deals an extra number of points of damage equal to the Imix-blooded creature's caster level.

Special Qualities: An Imix-blooded creature gains the following special qualities.

Burn (Su): The fires that cloak an Imix-blooded creature lash out to harm those who would dare attack it. Any creature that hits an Imix-blooded foe with a melee attack takes 3 points of fire damage.

Death Throes (Su): Imix is quick to reward those who follow him, but his fiery anger is legendary. When killed, an Imix-blooded creature explodes in a 30-foot-radius burst that deals fire damage to each creature or object in the area equal to 1d6 × 1/2 the Imix-blooded creature's Challenge Rating. A successful Reflex save (DC 10 + 1/2 the Imix-blooded creature's HD + its Cha modifier) halves this damage.

Illus. by R. Horsley

Kord-Blooded

"Kord-blooded" is an acquired template that can be added to any non-evil living creature that has a Strength score of 16 or higher. Each year, the major temples to Kord hold a great wrestling tournament, and the tournament's winner wrestles an aspect of Kord. Whoever pins the other wins. If Kord's aspect loses, he cuts his palm and drips a drop of blood on the victor's brow, bestowing this template. Sometimes Kord bestows this honor on a skilled, relentless competitor that lost the match.

Saves: A Kord-blooded creature gains a +4 bonus on saves against poison and disease.

Special Actions: A Kord-blooded creature gains the following special action.

Kord's Athleticism (Su): Once per day, as a swift action, a Kord-blooded creature can call upon the blood invested in him to gain a tremendous surge of prowess. For the next minute, the Kord-blooded creature gains a +4 bonus on Strength and Dexterity checks, Strength- and Dexterity-based skill checks, and grapple checks. The creature also gains a +1 bonus on damage rolls to which Strength normally applies.

Special Qualities: A Kord-blooded creature gains the following special quality.

Kord's Toughness (Su): Whenever a Kord-blooded creature would take Constitution damage, that damage is halved.

Orcus-Blooded

"Orcus-blooded" is an acquired template that can be added to any evil undead creature. The sacrifice of good-aligned creatures totaling 20 or more Hit Dice causes an aspect of Orcus to appear and bathe the petitioner with black, tarry blood poured from a golden chalice. The undead creature covered in this blood then grows goatlike horns and gains the Orcus-blooded template. The horns disappear when the template is lost.

Resist: An Orcus-blooded creature gains +4 turn resistance.

Special Qualities: An Orcus-blooded creature gains the following special qualities.

Herald of Orcus (Su): An Orcus-blooded creature gains a +1 bonus to the save DCs of necromancy spells it casts, as well as a +1 bonus to the save DCs of its spell-like and supernatural abilities.

Wand of Orcus (Su): Once per day, as a swift action, an Orcus-blooded creature can summon a *minor wand of Orcus*. The wand appears in the creature's hand and lasts for 1 minute. It functions as a *+2 morningstar.*

Once per day, while the wand exists, the Orcus-blooded creature can use it to deliver a melee touch attack. An opponent so touched must succeed on a Fortitude save (DC 10 + 1/2 the Orcus-blooded creature's HD + its Cha modifier) or take 4 points of Constitution damage. If that foe fails the save, the Orcus-blooded creature gains 2 temporary hit points per HD that enemy possesses. These temporary hit points last for 1 hour.

Vecna-Blooded

"Vecna-blooded" is an acquired template that can be added to any evil creature capable of casting 2nd-level or higher arcane spells. When an arcane spellcaster manages to unravel the Seven Riddles of Vecna, that individual can become Vecna-blooded. None know the true nature of these riddles, but solving them sends a caster to a pocket dimension known as the Oubliette of Secrets. There, after exposure to a number of bizarre tortures and ordeals at the hands of a strange creature known as the Anchorite, the caster emerges as a Vecna-blooded creature. The creature loses all distinguishing characteristics, hair, and other traits, keeping only a small, thin mouth, the faintest trace of a nose, and eyes. These changes are permanent and remain even after the creature loses this template.

Some sages believe that several Anchorites exist, and that they are the most powerful of Vecna's servants. They seek out lost secrets and forgotten lore. Several point to the disappearance of Delether of Hardby as the Anchorites' work. Every page of the books in Delether's library had been carefully removed and replaced with cured human skin—apparently taken from Delether, judging by the faint remnants of his tattoos found in several of the volumes.

Special Actions: A Vecna-blooded creature gains the following special actions.

Enigma Aura (Su): Once per day, as a standard action, a Vecna-blooded creature can wrap itself in an aura that makes creatures within 120 feet intermittently forget it's there. At the start of each affected creature's turn, that creature has a 50% chance to be unable to attack the Vecna-blooded creature in any way, including with spells and special abilities. The aura lasts for 1 minute after it's activated.

Hidden Spell (Su): Once per day, as a swift action, a Vecna-blooded creature can cause flat-footed opponents to take a

GOD-BLOODED LORE

Characters who have ranks in Knowledge (religion) can learn more about god-blooded creatures. When a character makes a successful skill check, the following lore is revealed, including the information from lower DCs.

Knowledge (Religion)

DC	Result
15	God-blooded creatures are divine champions infused with the essence of their deity. The god's blood within them makes them incredibly durable, but if they are sorely wounded, the god's power fades from them.
20	This result reveals one randomly chosen special action or special quality that the specific template grants.
25	This result reveals a second, randomly chosen special action or special quality.
30	This result reveals a third, randomly chosen special action or special quality.

–4 penalty on saves against spells the creature casts on that same turn.

Special Qualities: A Vecna-blooded creature gains the following special qualities.

Cloak of Mystery (Su): All knowledge of the Vecna-blooded creature fades from the world. Its original name, its deeds before becoming Vecna-blooded, and so forth, disappear from memory. Only Vecna and the Vecna-blooded creature retain this knowledge.

A Vecna-blooded creature gains immunity to all divination spells cast against it or cast to learn information about it. Such divination fails to reveal any information. The Vecna-blooded creature immediately learns the name, appearance, and location of the caster who attempted the divination.

Unlike other god-blooded abilities, the Vecna-blooded creature retains this special quality after it loses other abilities from this template.

Yeenoghu-Blooded

"Yeenoghu-blooded" is an acquired template that can be added to any gnoll. A gnoll champion gains the Yeenoghu-blooded template by killing a fellow gnoll who has this template and drinking his blood. In this manner, Yeenoghu ensures that his children continually strive to prove themselves against each other and their enemies. Occasionally, when an aspect of Yeenoghu appears before a tribe, the gnolls attack it in a frenzy to become Yeenoghu-blooded. Those who survive and devour the aspect's flesh gain this template.

A creature that gains this template becomes shrouded in noxious, putrid air. Flies and maggots swarm over its body, marking its link to the fearsome Demon Prince of Gnolls. It grows long, yellow fangs, and a mixture of pus and drool spills over its lower lip.

Melee: A Yeenoghu-blooded creature gains a secondary bite attack that deals 1d6 points of damage.

Special Actions: A Yeenoghu-blooded creature gains the following special actions.

Rot Fangs (Ex): Once per day, as a swift action, a Yeenoghu-blooded creature can imbue its bite with a dreadful necrotic energy. The next time the gnoll hits an opponent with a bite, that foe must succeed on a Fortitude save (DC 10 + 1/2 the gnoll's HD + its Con modifier) or take 1d6 points of Constitution damage.

Special Quality: A Yeenoghu-blooded creature gains the following special quality.

Gore Stench (Su): A Yeenoghu-blooded creature is caked with putrid filth, dried blood, and gore. Maggots crawl through its fur, and a horrific stench and a swarm of flies surround it at all times. Living creatures (except for gnolls) within 10 feet of a Yeenoghu-blooded creature must succeed on a Fortitude save (DC 10 + 1/2 the gnoll's HD + its Con modifier) or be sickened for 1 minute. If a creature successfully saves against this ability, that creature need not save again for 24 hours. A *delay poison* or *neutralize poison* spell removes the effect from a sickened creature. Creatures that are immune to poison or that have a saving throw bonus against poison receive those benefits against the stench.

TYPICAL TREASURE

A god-blooded creature usually carries icons of its faith, to mark the favor of the gods and to display its piety. God-blooded NPCs have equipment appropriate to NPCs of their Challenge Rating—slightly more than normal for their level.

CREATING GOD-BLOODED TEMPLATES

The example templates given in this entry cover some of the entities found in the D&D world. If you wish to add god-blooded creatures to Eberron, Faerûn, or your campaign setting, use the following guidelines.

A god-blooded template should physically alter its recipient in a manner in keeping with the god's ethos and important physical traits. Powers granted by the template might further change the recipient. In the examples given in this entry, Gruumsh's single eye, Imix's fiery body, and Orcus's horns mark the creature that receives the deity's blood. Similar traits should be gained from templates you create.

All god-blooded templates share the divine endurance special quality. This ability reflects a combination of the supernatural protection offered by divine blood. As presented, the template produces a creature that seems incredibly difficult to harm at the start of an encounter. If the characters persist in attacking, though, they eventually strip away that defense. If you prefer a permanent template, change the damage reduction to 5/magic and remove the limit on the damage it can absorb.

The template should grant two special abilities in addition to divine endurance. You can add a third if that ability has little direct effect on combat. The Vecna-blooded template provides a good example of such an ability with its cloak of mystery. The cloak adds some interesting story elements to the creature, but it has little effect during a fight.

The creature's abilities should be useful regardless of its final Challenge Rating. Abilities that deal a fixed amount of damage are difficult to judge, since that damage doesn't scale as the creature's CR increases. Instead of such abilities, focus on attacks that require saving throws and impose conditions, since save DCs improve as Hit Dice increase, forcing the PCs to make saving throws appropriate for the creature's challenge. Keep the duration conditions such as paralyzed, dazed, or stunned short—they take a target out of the fight. Longer durations are fine for dazzled, sickened, and other conditions that impose penalties.

Avoid abilities that add static bonuses to ability scores, attacks, or AC, instead choosing abilities that make it apparent to the characters and players that the god-blooded creature is infused with the power of its deity. The PCs (and the players) should see a clear link between the creature's altered form, the power it calls upon, and the effects it can create.

GOLEM

Golems are magically created automatons of great power. Constructing one involves the employment of mighty magic and elemental forces. Golems are summarized on page 134 of the *Monster Manual.*

FORCE GOLEM

Humanoid in shape but covered in reflective blue-green metal plates, this creature looks as though it has been mangled or rent by powerful hands. Its body sags as though its armor has melted, or perhaps was reshaped by great force.

FORCE GOLEM **CR 4**
Usually N Large construct
Init +7; **Senses** darkvision 60 ft., low-light vision; Listen +2, Spot +3
Languages Common, Terran

AC 18, touch 16, flat-footed 15
(–1 size, +3 Dex, +4 deflection, +2 natural)
hp 52 (4 HD); **DR** 5/adamantine
Immune construct immunities, magic
Resist sonic 10
Fort +1, **Ref** +6, **Will** +1
Weakness force vulnerability

Speed 30 ft. (6 squares)
Melee 2 slams +6 each (1d8+4)
Ranged pulse +5 ranged touch (knock back)
Space 10 ft.; **Reach** 10 ft.
Base Atk +3; **Grp** +11
Atk Options Point Blank Shot
Special Actions force burst, force reactive

Abilities Str 19, Dex 16, Con —, Int 12, Wis 10, Cha 14
SA force burst, force reactive, pulse
SQ construct traits
Feats Improved Initiative, Point Blank Shot
Skills Balance +8, Jump +11, Listen +2, Spot +3, Tumble +9
Advancement 5–10 HD (Large); 11–15 HD (Huge)

Immunity to Magic (Ex) A force golem is immune to spells and spell-like abilities that allow spell resistance. This immunity does not extend to force effects.

Force Vulnerability (Ex) Force effects deal half again as much (+50%) damage to a force golem.

Force Burst (Su) Once every 3 rounds, a force golem can create a 30-foot-radius burst of force centered on itself. Creatures in the area take 2d6 points of damage and are knocked prone. Those who succeed on a DC 14 Reflex save take half damage and remain standing. Force golems are immune to this ability. The save DC is Charisma-based.

Force Reactive (Su) Whenever an opponent attacks and misses a force golem with a melee attack, the force golem can turn the kinetic energy of the attack back on the attacker as an immediate action. The attacker is pushed 5 feet into an empty square of the force golem's choice. This movement does not provoke attacks of opportunity.

Pulse (Sp) A force golem can target any corporeal opponent within 60 feet with a ranged touch attack. If the force golem hits, it and its target make opposed Strength checks. If the force golem wins the opposed check, the opponent is pushed 10 feet in a direction of the golem's choice and falls prone in the square it ends up in. This movement does not provoke attacks of opportunity.

A force golem can push an opponent only in a straight line, and it cannot push an opponent closer to it than the square that foe started in. If an intervening obstacle prevents the opponent from being pushed 10 feet, the foe and the obstacle each take 1d6 points of damage. The opponent then falls prone in the square it was in before striking the obstacle.

Any feat or special ability that grants a bonus on resisting bull rush attempts (such as a dwarf's stability) applies to this opposed Strength check.

Force golems are imbued with the power to manipulate kinetic energy and raw force. They can turn opponents' attacks back against them and knock foes flying with a thought.

Strategies and Tactics

A force golem's unusual intelligence has a specific purpose, allowing it to make the best use of its force burst and pulse abilities. These constructs are capable of complex tactical analysis, and they never simply lash out at random foes.

The key to a force golem's success in combat lies in keeping enemies at a distance. Already immune to a lot of magical attacks, force golems ward off melee attackers, using their force burst ability and their pulse attack, knocking foes against walls or other obstacles if possible. A force golem does its best to knock opponents over pitfalls or drop-offs on the battlefield.

If attackers close to melee range, a force golem uses its force burst to keep from being surrounded or flanked. It uses its force reactive ability to push combatants away as well, keeping smaller combatants at a disadvantage.

A group of force golems can be devastating in combat. They stagger the use of their force bursts to attack foes in each round and prevent those enemies from gaining strategic position. They target different ranged foes with their pulse ability, breaking up the opposing force.

FORCE GOLEM LORE

Characters who have ranks in Knowledge (arcana) can learn more about force golems. When a character makes a successful skill check, the following lore is revealed, including the information from lower DCs.

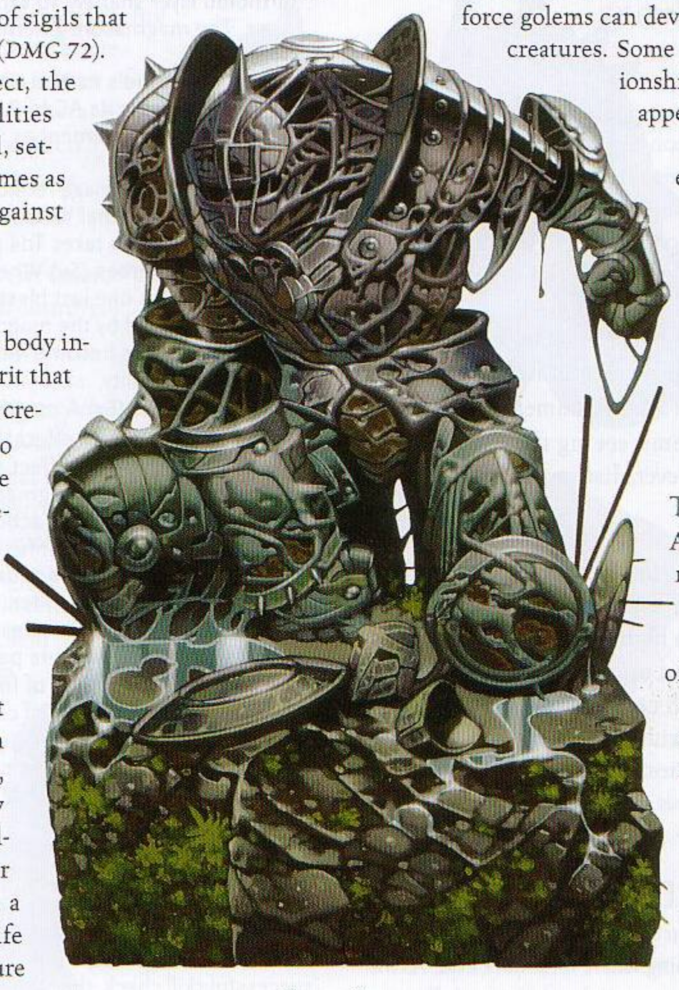
Knowledge (Arcana)

DC	Result
14	This is a force golem, an unusually intelligent construct. This result reveals all construct traits.
19	A force golem can knock groups of foes prone with a damage-dealing burst of force. It can target individual creatures and push them backward with a pulse of force.
24	Force golems can absorb and redirect the kinetic energy of missed melee attacks, knocking opponents out of melee range. They are immune to most magic but vulnerable to force effects.

Sample Encounter

Though force golems are typically deployed as guardians, wizards and sorcerers sometimes use these creatures as combat support. Able to push foes away from a spellcaster or prevent enemies from fleeing, a force golem makes a great bodyguard. It can also help an arcane spellcaster maximize the number of creatures affected by area spells. These intelligent golems are commonly found in pairs, but they might appear in larger gangs.

Trap Masters (EL 8): Three force golems guard a huge antechamber to a wizard's ancient vault. On the floor of the antechamber is a circle of sigils that functions as a *fireball* trap (*DMG* 72). Immune to the trap's effect, the force golems use their abilities to move opponents around, setting off the trap as many times as possible during any battle against interlopers.



Force golem

Ecology

A force golem is a construct body inhabited by an elemental spirit that made a pact with the golem's creator, requiring the golem to follow orders but allowing the elemental spirit some independence and awareness. As such, force golems can be controlled more effectively than other types of golems—they can follow complex orders and carry out sophisticated tasks. Though they think independently, force golems usually carry out their commands unfailingly. However, if a master proves overly domineering, a force golem might make life more difficult for that creature or even rebel against it.

Environment: Force golems function in any environment, though they prefer places where they can use their abilities to their best advantage. Wide-open spaces allow them to maximize the number of enemies they can affect. Force golems avoid confined areas when they can.

Typical Physical Characteristics: Force golems appear to have been created with an orderly design in mind—a design somehow ruined by the powerful forces these constructs control. Their armor is bent and has a melted quality, an effect of the residual energy that radiates constantly from their bodies.

Force golems are tall but stout. They stand about 8 feet tall and weigh 1,200 pounds.

Alignment: Though they have greater intelligence than others of their kind, nearly all force golems remain steadfastly neutral. A rare few of these constructs willingly take on the morals of good or evil masters, and some flee from any control that attempts to subvert their neutral nature.

Society

When not controlled, these intelligent constructs are drawn to populated areas. Barring prejudice against them, force golems can develop relationships with other creatures. Some even seem to need companionship, which is why they usually appear in groups.

Though they have no society or culture, force golems share a common bond of understanding. They consider other force golems to be allies. Force golems that have broken away from their masters sometimes form small bands, defending each other from common foes.

Typical Treasure

A force golem has usually has no wealth of its own, but it might guard its master's valuables. One that is free of outside control could develop a taste for riches and acquire standard treasure for its Challenge Rating.

For Player Characters

Arcane spellcasters create force golems as guardians for specific locations, as bodyguards, or both. With their high intelligence and force-manipulation abilities, these constructs are difficult to thwart, and they can contain foes rather than destroy them. They are also able to differentiate malicious intruders from simple trespassers who might be indiscriminately slain by nonintelligent golems or magic traps.

Force Golem Construction: A force golem's metal body is composed of several different alloys, blended together in a precise combination before being poured into specially created molds that cost 2,000 gp. Raw materials and supplies for this process cost 2,250 gp. A mold can be used only once; it is destroyed in the process of creating the golem.

Illus. by T. Giorello

Creating the body from the shaped pieces requires a DC 20 Craft (armorsmithing) check.

Once the body is finished, the creator of a force golem must lure an elemental spirit from the Elemental Plane of Earth. The spirit agrees to obey the creator in exchange for being able to remain sentient, and the creator bonds the spirit with the golem body. When the bonding process is complete, the elemental spirit warps and shapes the body to its own liking.

CL 12th; Craft Construct, *animate objects, contact other plane, lesser planar binding*, caster must be at least 12th level; Price 50,000 gp; Cost 29,250 gp + 2,000 XP.

Force Golems in Eberron

The process of creating a force golem is different from that of creating golems that contain bound elementals, but some believe that force golems represent an advancement in elemental binding. Artificers of House Cannith are rumored to pay for information leading to the discovery of force golems in unaffiliated hands, lending some credence to these rumors.

Though force golems are merely elemental spirits bound into an artificial body, they display a level of awareness similar to that of living constructs. As a result, numerous warforged are curious about these golems, seeing them as kindred spirits. A few warforged, however, distrust force golems.

Force Golems in Faerûn

Though not unheard of in Faerûn, force golems are exceedingly rare. More than few arcane spellcasters are distrustful of constructs that have such a high degree of sentience and autonomy, and a lot of wizard organizations forbid their members from creating such creatures. Perhaps the fear of rebellious constructs overrides arcane creativity in this case. Despite these generalities, the Red Wizards of Thay are known to use force golems as guardians for their most important magical sites.

MAGMACORE GOLEM

Overlapping plates of gleaming metal cover the body of this humanoid figure, the air around it rippling where it radiates heat. As the creature moves, you see what appears to be molten rock flowing between the gaps of its armor.

MAGMACORE GOLEM **CR 4**

Always N Medium construct

Init +2; **Senses** darkvision 60 ft., low-light vision; Listen –1, Spot –1

Languages understands creator's orders

AC 20, touch 12, flat-footed 18 (+2 Dex, +8 natural)

hp 47 (4 HD); **DR** 5/adamantine; shattered armor, volcanic death throes

Immune construct immunities, electricity, fire, magic

Fort +1, **Ref** +3, **Will** +0

Speed 30 ft. (6 squares)

Melee slam +7 (1d8+4)

Space 5 ft.; **Reach** 5 ft.

Base Atk +3; **Grp** +6

Special Actions molten step

Abilities Str 16, Dex 14, Con —, Int —, Wis 8, Cha 6

SA molten step, volcanic death throes

SQ construct traits

Feats Weapon Focus (slam)^{B}

Skills Listen –1, Spot –1

Advancement 5–10 HD (Medium)

Shattered Armor (Ex) When a magmacore golem is reduced to half of its full normal hit points or fewer, its outer armored layer shatters to expose the creature's molten core. The magmacore golem's statistics change as follows:

The creature's natural armor bonus to AC is reduced to +1, decreasing its AC by 7.

It gains concealment as if under a permanent *blur* effect.

It loses its damage reduction 5/adamantine.

Any creature that touches or makes a melee attack against the golem takes 1d4 points of fire damage.

Volcanic Death Throes (Su) When destroyed, a magmacore golem releases one last blast of molten energy. The square occupied by the magmacore golem and all adjacent squares become molten as if affected by the molten step ability.

Immunity to Magic (Ex) A magmacore golem is immune to any spell or spell-like effect that allows spell resistance. However, any spell or effect that deals cold damage deals normal damage to a magmacore golem.

Molten Step (Su) As a swift action, once every 3 rounds, a magmacore golem can infuse its essence into any two adjacent squares. These squares explode into molten flame for 2 minutes. Molten squares cost 2 squares of movement to enter, and creatures can't run or charge across them. Any creature passing through a molten square takes 1d6 points of fire damage.

If 10 or more points of cold damage are directed at a molten square, it returns to normal. Affected squares cool immediately when the effect ends, but they retain a blasted and burned appearance.

MAGMACORE GOLEM LORE

Characters who have ranks in Knowledge (arcana) can learn more about magmacore golems. When a character makes a successful skill check, the following lore is revealed, including the information from lower DCs.

Knowledge (Arcana)

DC	Result
14	This is a magmacore golem, a construct bound with spirits from the Elemental Planes of Earth and Fire. This result reveals all construct traits.
19	Magmacore golems can infuse the ground around them with magical fire, turning it molten. They are immune to fire, electricity, and most magic, but cold can harm them.
24	A magmacore golem becomes more dangerous as it weakens, first dealing fire damage when its armor fails, then turning all adjacent squares molten as it dies.

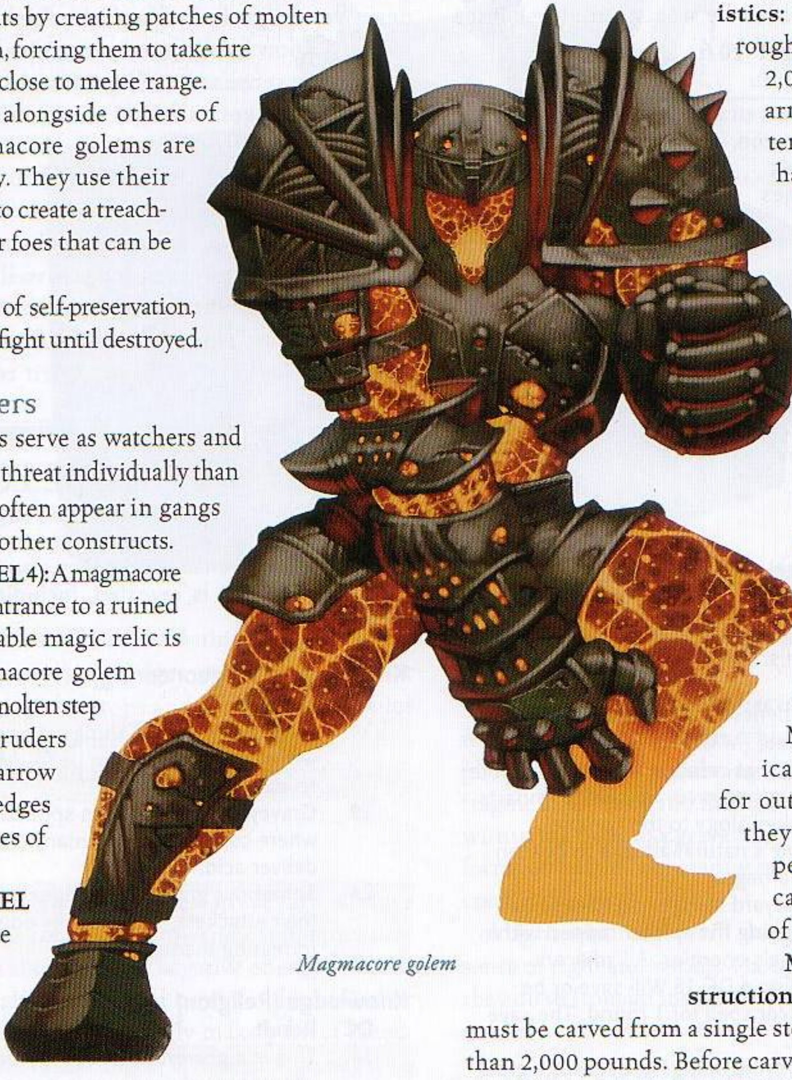
A magmacore golem is a humanoid-shaped construct crafted from molten rock and surrounded by an armored shell. It is a strange amalgamation of fire and earth.

Strategies and Tactics

Due to the blending of fire and earth elemental spirits within it, a magmacore golem is fierce and charges headlong into battle. It uses its molten step ability to create patches of molten ground, preventing opponents from easily flanking it. If possible, a magmacore golem also cuts off potential melee opponents by creating patches of molten ground in their path, forcing them to take fire damage in order to close to melee range.

When fighting alongside others of their kind, magmacore golems are particularly deadly. They use their molten step ability to create a treacherous battlefield for foes that can be harmed by fire.

Having no sense of self-preservation, magmacore golems fight until destroyed.



Magmacore golem

Illus. by T. Giorello

Sample Encounters

Magmacore golems serve as watchers and guardians. Less of a threat individually than other golems, they often appear in gangs or in groups with other constructs.

Lone Guardian (EL 4): A magmacore golem guards the entrance to a ruined mine where a valuable magic relic is hidden. The magmacore golem initially reserves its molten step ability, drawing intruders into the mine's narrow passages. It then hedges them in with patches of molten stone.

Fire and Force (EL 6–8): Magmacore golems are sometimes paired with force golems (see above). The force golem can command the magmacore golems, and the creatures combine their abilities for maximum effect.

EL 7: A force golem and two magmacore golems stand guard over the tomb of an ancient sorcerer. When they engage intruders, the force golem uses its kinetic abilities to push enemies toward squares affected by molten step.

Ecology

A magmacore golem is created when an arcane spellcaster binds a spirit from the Elemental Plane of Earth into a construct body, then draws another spirit from the Elemental Plane of Fire to create the golem's molten core. The pairing of these spirits makes magmacore golems more readily violent than other similar constructs.

Environment: Magmacore golems can be found anywhere, though they work best in areas where they can use their ability to turn their surroundings molten. As such, these creatures are typically deployed in locations where they do not risk damaging part of a permanent structure.

Typical Physical Characteristics: Magmacore golems stand roughly 6 feet tall and weigh over 2,000 pounds. Plates of their armor are fused over a molten rock core, and their heads have no discernible features except a smooth, eyeless faceplate.

Alignment: Magmacore golems always follow their master's orders without question. They are neutral.

Typical Treasure

A magmacore golem has no treasure, but it is sometimes charged with guarding valuables.

For Player Characters

Magmacore golems are typically created as guardians for out-of-the-way locations, but they sometimes serve as the personal guardians of spellcasters dedicated to the arts of fire.

Magmacore Golem Construction: A magmacore golem's body must be carved from a single stone slab weighing no fewer than 2,000 pounds. Before carving, the slab is treated with rare oils and powders worth 500 gp, and it is shaped by someone who must succeed on a DC 10 Craft (sculpting) check. Then the armor is attached—a suit of masterwork full plate specially crafted for the creation process at a cost of 1,650 gp. When the spirits of fire and earth are bound within the armored body, the stone melts into a mass of molten rock.

CL 9th; Craft Construct, *animate objects, commune, lesser planar binding*, caster must be at least 9th level; Price 35,000 gp; Cost 19,650 gp + 1,400 XP.

GRAVEYARD SLUDGE

A writhing puddle of black and green sludge twists and squirms as though animated by a supernatural force. Within the disgusting liquid are the limp body parts of a variety of dead humanoids. Here and there, chunks of flesh can be seen—a severed head protruding from one side, a leg extending from the top of the creature. As the sludge slides across the ground, human faces and hands appear to be pressing outward from within.

Graveyard Sludge **CR 4**
Always N Large ooze
Init +1; **Senses** blind, blindsight 120 ft.; Listen –5
Languages —

AC 17, touch 14, flat-footed 16
(–1 size, +1 Dex, +4 deflection, +3 natural)
hp 63 (6 HD); between worlds
Immune acid, ooze immunities
Fort +7, **Ref** +3, **Will** –3

Speed 30 ft. (6 squares)
Melee slam +7 (1d6+6 plus 1d6 acid)
Space 10 ft.; **Reach** 5 ft.
Base Atk +4; **Grp** +12
Special Actions oozespawn zombies, spirit resurgence, vigor of the dead

Abilities Str 18, Dex 12, Con 20, Int —, Wis 1, Cha 1
SA oozespawn zombies, spirit resurgence, vigor of the dead
SQ ooze traits
Feats —
Skills Listen –5
Advancement 7–11 HD (Large); 12–16 HD (Huge); 17–21 HD (Gargantuan)

Between Worlds (Su) Graveyard sludges are healed by both *cure* spells and *inflict* spells. They take no damage from *inflict* spells.

Oozespawn Zombies (Su) Whenever a creature that can acquire the zombie template (*MM* 265) dies within 20 feet of a graveyard sludge, that creature rises as a zombie 1d4 rounds later. However, the graveyard sludge imparts some of its own unique physiology to the zombie, causing each of the zombie's natural attacks to deal an extra 1d6 points of acid damage.

Spirit Resurgence (Su) A graveyard sludge can release its latent spiritual energy, causing the spirits trapped within it to reach out at the sludge's enemies. All adjacent opponents must succeed on a DC 18 Will save or be subject to the effect of a *fear* spell for 1 round. The save DC is Constitution-based.

Vigor of the Dead (Su) A graveyard sludge possesses a great deal of negative energy, and it can sacrifice its actions to transfer that energy to nearby undead. As a full-round action, a graveyard sludge can target a single adjacent undead creature. That creature gains a +2 bonus on saving throws, a +2 bonus on caster level checks made when casting spells from the necromancy school, DR 5/good, and +2 turn resistance. These benefits last for 1 round.

A graveyard sludge is an ooze that forms in an area where the remains of the dead are defiled. Its body is composed of a disgusting muck interspersed with the flesh and bones of corpses it has absorbed. The sludge is awash in latent spiritual energy siphoned from devoured remains, which gives viewers the impression that humanoid creatures trapped within it are pushing out and trying to escape.

STRATEGIES AND TACTICS

Since graveyard sludges are mindless, they put no thought into their tactics beyond attacking obvious threats. However, graveyard sludges can sense necromancy and negative energy, including that which animates undead, so they know when sentient undead are in the area. When they sense an intelligent undead creature nearby, graveyard sludges willingly sacrifice themselves for that creature's benefit.

When undead creatures that can benefit from its abilities are near, a graveyard sludge uses vigor of the dead to enhance the most powerful creature among them. That creature usually protects the graveyard sludge as well, if only to continue gaining the benefits the ooze provides.

If a graveyard sludge finds itself surrounded or under intense melee assault, it uses spirit resurgence to force

GRAVEYARD SLUDGE LORE

Characters who have ranks in Knowledge (dungeoneering) or Knowledge (religion) can learn more about graveyard sludges. When a character makes a successful skill check, the following lore is revealed, including the information from lower DCs.

Knowledge (Dungeoneering)

DC	Result
14	This is a graveyard sludge, an ooze that lives where dead bodies can be found. This result reveals all ooze traits.
19	Graveyard sludges form spontaneously in places where corpses lie. Like many oozes, their slams deliver acid.
24	Somehow, graveyard sludges can cause fear in their attackers. They usually do so just before retreating themselves.

Knowledge (Religion)

DC	Result
14	This is a graveyard sludge, an ooze that spontaneously appears in areas where negative energy collects.
19	Any creature slain by a graveyard sludge rises as a zombielike creature with an acidic touch.
24	Undead creatures are strengthened by the presence of a graveyard sludge. Such undead are more resistant to almost every form of attack as well as to turning. They gain a small amount of magical potency if they're spellcasters.
29	Graveyard sludges are at once living and dead. They are healed by both *cure* spells and *inflict* spells.

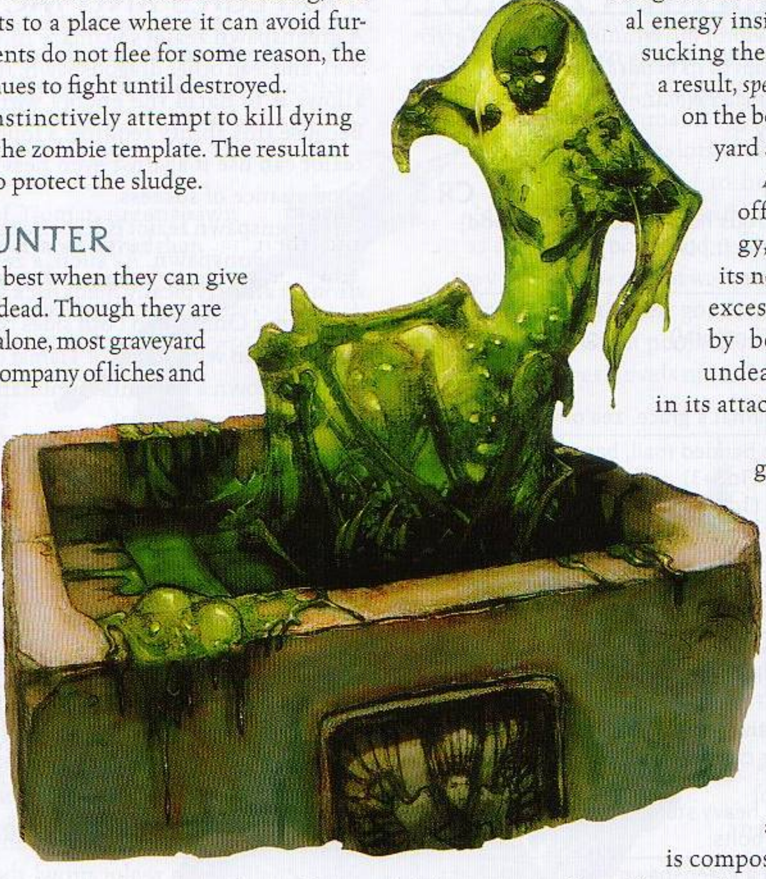
enemies to flee. Once it has sent its attackers running, the graveyard sludge retreats to a place where it can avoid further harm. If its opponents do not flee for some reason, the graveyard sludge continues to fight until destroyed.

Graveyard sludges instinctively attempt to kill dying creatures that can gain the zombie template. The resultant oozespawn zombies also protect the sludge.

SAMPLE ENCOUNTER

Graveyard sludges work best when they can give a temporary boost to undead. Though they are sometimes encountered alone, most graveyard sludges are found in the company of liches and other undead spellcasters, who prize the oozes as living sources of necromantic power.

Skull Lord's Minions (EL 10): A skull lord (page 154) has created two bonespurs (page 156) and gathered a following of four graveyard sludges. Believing the characters have an object it wants, the skull lord attacks the thorp where the PCs are resting. It first sends the graveyard sludges and bonespurs after the villagers, creating skeletons and oozespawn zombies in the process, hoping to draw out the characters. Adjacent to the skull lord at all times is one graveyard sludge, using vigor of the dead.



Graveyard sludge

ECOLOGY

Unlike most other living creatures, graveyard sludges are not the result of reproduction—they spontaneously spawn wherever an abundance of negative energy collects. Desecrated graveyards, corrupted battlefields, and other places where the dead lie improperly make perfect breeding grounds for graveyard sludges. When enough negative energy builds up, that energy coalesces in the form of a disgusting ooze, which then proceeds to assimilate nearby cadavers and skeletons.

Graveyard sludges have within their bodies the remains of at least a dozen different creatures at any given time, if not more. Surges in the energy drawn from these remains create ghostly images within the body of a graveyard sludge, though these spiritual manifestations are not actually creatures.

A graveyard sludge feeds on the dead, but a corpse is little more than a container for what the sludge is really after. The sludge sucks out the remaining spiritual energy inside a cadaver like a beast sucking the marrow from a bone. As a result, *speak with dead* doesn't work on the bodies absorbed by a graveyard sludge.

A graveyard sludge feeds off residual spiritual energy, and once it has gained its nourishment, it stores the excess. It releases this energy by bolstering and creating undead, or by invoking fear in its attackers.

Environment: Though graveyard sludges can go for long periods between meals, they prefer to remain within striking distance of graveyards and tombs where they can gather more food. A graveyard sludge seeks dark, damp environments where it can rest. Since a graveyard sludge's body is composed of muck drawn from the soil around a grave site, these creatures are frequently found inhabiting open graves or disturbed sepulchers.

Typical Physical Characteristics: Graveyard sludges resemble large piles of mud, blood, and pus. They are amorphous, moving by undulating their formless bodies. Random fragments of bone and flesh protrude in all directions from within the body of a graveyard sludge, and the slow-moving forms of "spirits" constantly push outward from within the creature's body.

Alignment: Graveyard sludges have no intelligence, no sense of right and wrong. Though they assist evil creatures, they do so from an instinctual compulsion. They are always neutral.

GRAVEYARD SLUDGES IN EBERRON

Graveyard sludges roam the Mournland, absorbing spiritual energy and gorging themselves on the remains of the dead. From points in Karrnath, undead that serve the state or the Blood of Vol capture sludges on the edge of Cyre's corpse, employing the oozes as bolstering pets.

It is whispered among the members of the Blood of Vol that Vol herself sends agents to the Mournland to capture graveyard sludges. Perhaps some of these oozes make it to Vol's lair somewhere on the island of Farlnen in the Lhazaar Principalities.

Illus. by A. Waters

GREENSPAWN ZEALOT

Draconic yellow eyes glow within this creature's helm, and green scales glisten between the gaps in its banded mail. With a heavy mace in hand, it raises a shield emblazoned with the symbol of Tiamat and shouts a war cry.

GREENSPAWN ZEALOT **CR 5**

Always LE Medium monstrous humanoid (dragonblood)
Init +4; **Senses** darkvision 60 ft.; Listen +1, Spot +10
Languages Common, Draconic

AC 21, touch 10, flat-footed 21
(+6 armor, +2 shield, +3 natural)
Immune acid
hp 45 (6 HD)
Fort +5, **Ref** +5, **Will** +8; Tiamat's grace, zealotry

Speed 20 ft. (4 squares) in banded mail, base speed 30 ft.
Melee heavy mace +10/+5 (1d8+3)
Ranged light crossbow +6 (1d8/19–20)
Space 5 ft.; **Reach** 5 ft.
Base Atk +6; **Grp** +9
Attack Options favored enemy humans +2
Special Actions touch of Tiamat (+9 melee touch)

Abilities Str 16, Dex 11, Con 16, Int 10, Wis 12, Cha 12
Feats Improved Initiative, Iron Will, Weapon Focus (heavy mace)
Skills Listen +1, Sense Motive +10, Spot +10
Advancement by character class; **Favored Class** favored soul; see text
Possessions banded mail, heavy steel shield, heavy mace, light crossbow with 10 bolts

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Tiamat's Grace (Su) When a greenspawn zealot is adjacent to one or more other greenspawn zealots, it gains a +2 bonus on saving throws.

Zealotry (Ex) Once per day, as an immediate action, a greenspawn zealot can reroll one saving throw.

Favored Enemy (Ex) A greenspawn zealot gains a +2 bonus on Bluff, Listen, Sense Motive, Spot, and Survival checks when using these skills against humans. Likewise, it gains a +2 bonus on weapon damage rolls against humans.

Touch of Tiamat (Su) A greenspawn zealot can damage living creatures with its touch attack. It can deal up to 18 points of damage per day in this way (Will DC 16 half), divided among as many touches as it chooses. When a greenspawn zealot deals damage with its touch, it simultaneously heals one dragon or dragonblood creature of its choice (including itself) within 30 feet of the same amount of damage. The save DC is Constitution-based.

A greenspawn zealot that has levels in a divine spellcasting class and worships Tiamat can apply this effect to *inflict* spells it casts. The *inflict* spell deals normal damage, simultaneously healing a nearby dragon or dragonblood creature the greenspawn zealot chooses.

Greenspawn zealots are the battle captains, chaplains, and war leaders of the spawn of Tiamat (*MM4* 128). They have a natural affinity for divine magic, and many take up the path of cleric or favored soul (*Complete Divine* 6). Such zealots use their religious fervor to motivate dragonspawn and other worshipers of Tiamat.

STRATEGIES AND TACTICS

A greenspawn zealot's primary role in battle is to aid, support, and lead other dragonspawn. Its touch of Tiamat ability allows it to harm the enemy while bolstering its allies. Because this ability requires a touch attack, a greenspawn zealot can use it against even heavily armored foes with a good chance of success.

A greenspawn zealot is less effective in combat than some other dragonspawn. As such, a zealot fighting alongside stronger allies typically holds back while those allies engage the enemy. Only when both sides have taken damage does a zealot step in with touch of Tiamat or an *inflict* spell, hoping to strike down a foe while simultaneously restoring an ally to full fighting potential.

A zealot leading weaker creatures wades into melee at the start of the fight. It saves its touch of Tiamat ability until it has suffered a grievous injury, then targets a weak opponent and heals itself. Once its touch of Tiamat is expended, a zealot typically flees if threatened, leaving its minions to their fate.

SAMPLE ENCOUNTERS

Greenspawn zealots are encountered alone only when they are stranded far from their allies, most often in the aftermath of a defeat. At all other times, they are surrounded by other dragonspawn.

Ambush Party (EL 6): Two greenspawn sneaks (*MM4* 148) and a greenspawn zealot prowl the countryside, ambushing and killing small groups of non-evil creatures. With its heavy armor, the greenspawn zealot acts as a decoy, making enough noise to draw enemy scouts to its location. When the zealot comes under attack, the greenspawn sneaks spring an ambush, darting in to flank and use their sneak attack ability.

GREENSPAWN ZEALOT LORE

Characters who have ranks in Knowledge (nature) can learn more about greenspawn zealots. When a character makes a successful skill check, the following lore is revealed, including the information from lower DCs.

Knowledge (Nature)

DC	Result
15	This creature is a greenspawn zealot, a monstrous humanoid related to green dragons.
20	Greenspawn zealots are the spiritual leaders and religious enforcers of Tiamat's armies. They command other dragonspawn and Tiamat's allies in battle, ensuring that dragonspawn remain faithful to Tiamat. A greenspawn zealot is more resilient when near another of its kind.
25	A zealot has a damage-dealing touch attack that also allows it to heal itself or a nearby draconic creature.

War Party (EL 7): A greenspawn zealot commands a detachment of eight hobgoblin warriors (*MM* 193) and an ogre (*MM* 199). The zealot cares little for the lives of its underlings, and it is happy to sacrifice them as long as doing so guarantees success in combat.

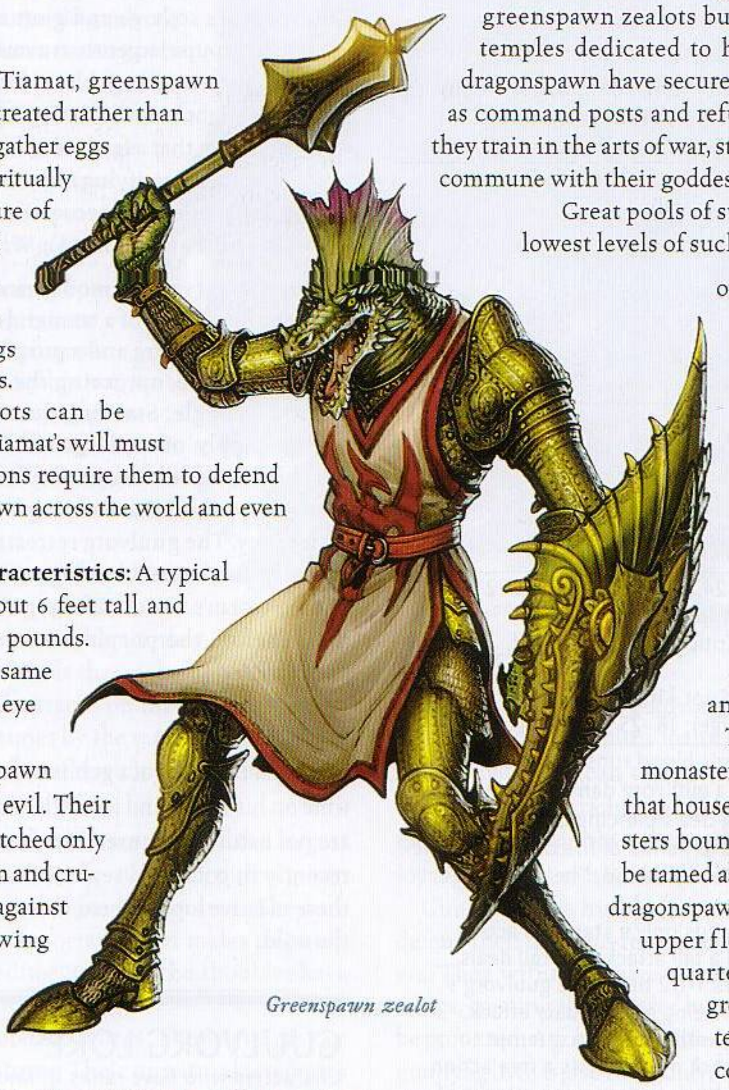
ECOLOGY

Unlike other spawn of Tiamat, greenspawn zealots are intentionally created rather than born by chance. Zealots gather eggs from other dragonspawn, ritually bathing them in a mixture of Tiamat's blood, the blood of an ancient green dragon, and crushed emeralds worth 200 gp. Such eggs hatch greenspawn zealots.

Environment: Zealots can be found in any area where Tiamat's will must be enforced. Their missions require them to defend the faith of the dragonspawn across the world and even on other planes.

Typical Physical Characteristics: A typical greenspawn zealot is about 6 feet tall and weighs a little over 200 pounds. Males and females are the same size, and only a practiced eye can tell the two apart.

Alignment: Greenspawn zealots are always lawful evil. Their dedication to Tiamat is matched only by their capacity for sadism and cruelty. Zealots rarely turn against each other, instead showing the utmost devotion to the chain of command of which they are a part. They focus their efforts on destroying Tiamat's enemies, as well as on uncovering and punishing lapses in faith among the members of her legions.



Greenspawn zealot

Illus. by J. Zhang

SOCIETY

Greenspawn zealots are indoctrinated in the teachings of Tiamat from a young age and shaped into fanatical devotees to her cause. They are the commissars of Tiamat's legions—defenders of the faith responsible for ensuring a proper level of dedication and enthusiasm among the troops. Scores also serve as higher-level officers and warlords. Other dragonspawn, particularly the chaotic blackspawn raiders and redspawn arcanisses, frequently come to resent the zealots' power. However, few are willing to rise against these chosen of Tiamat.

In some ways, greenspawn zealots are the most dangerous of Tiamat's children. Though they lack the destructive capability of bluespawn godslayers and the like, their place in the hierarchy of power allows them to marshal and command other dragonspawn against their enemies. Even a godslayer could fall to superior numbers.

When Tiamat's legions launch an invasion, greenspawn zealots build small monasteries and temples dedicated to her glory in the areas the dragonspawn have secured. These monasteries serve as command posts and refuges for the zealots. There, they train in the arts of war, study Tiamat's holy texts, and commune with their goddess.

Great pools of swirling energy occupy the lowest levels of such places. Greenspawn zealots use these to communicate with Tiamat and her vassals. One moment, fire roils from these pools; the next, they might freeze solid, erupt with bolts of electricity, or vent plumes of acid. From the pools, greenspawn zealots receive orders, religious edicts, and tidings from across the planes, then go forth to spread the word and their religion.

The tunnels beneath these monasteries also contain dungeons that house captured opponents, monsters bound for experiments or set to be tamed as beasts of war, and renegade dragonspawn awaiting execution. The upper floors house shrines, living quarters, and classrooms where greenspawn zealots study matters of faith and practice their combat skills.

TYPICAL TREASURE

Greenspawn zealots covet light, portable forms of wealth such as gems and jewelry. They also actively seek out magic items, hoping to deny them to the enemy even as such objects are turned to Tiamat's cause. They have standard treasure for their Challenge Rating, and they equip themselves as NPCs of their CR when they gain class levels.

GREENSPAWN ZEALOTS WITH CLASS LEVELS

Greenspawn zealots are devoted to the faith of Tiamat, and they usually become divine spellcasters. Their favored class is favored soul from *Complete Divine*. If you do not use that book, use cleric as the favored class. Both classes are associated for a greenspawn zealot.

Level Adjustment: +2.

GUULVORG

The mouth of this gigantic black wolf can't contain the scythelike fangs that emerge from the top and bottom. Bony protrusions jut from its spine, skull, and ribs, running down its serpentine tail, which ends in a bulb of bone. The creature's eyes burn with a malevolent red glow.

GUULVORG CR 13

Usually NE Huge magical beast
Init +4; **Senses** darkvision 120 ft., low-light vision, scent; Listen +10, Spot +10
Languages Goblin, Worg

AC 26, touch 12, flat-footed 22
(–2 size, +4 Dex, +14 natural)
Immune cold
Resist fire 15
hp 175 (14 HD); boiling blood; **DR** 10/magic
Fort +16, **Ref** +13, **Will** +9

Speed 60 ft. (12 squares)
Melee bite +21 (2d6+9/19–20/×4 plus trip) and tail +19 (4d8+13)
Space 15 ft.; **Reach** 10 ft. (15 ft. with tail)
Base Atk +14; **Grp** +31
Atk Options magic strike, quick tail

Abilities Str 28, Dex 18, Con 24, Int 6, Wis 16, Cha 12
SA boiling blood, quick tail, trip
Feats Alertness, Improved Critical (bite), Iron Will, Multiattack, Track
Skills Jump +21, Listen +10, Spot +10, Survival +10
Advancement 15–17 HD (Huge); 18–25 HD (Gargantuan)

Boiling Blood (Ex) A guulvorg's blood runs steaming hot. If an opponent adjacent to a guulvorg damages the creature with a melee weapon that deals piercing or slashing damage, that foe takes 1d10 points of fire damage (Reflex DC 24 half) from a spray of hot blood. The save DC is Constitution-based.

Quick Tail (Ex) A guulvorg needs only a standard action to make a bite attack and a tail attack. The tail deals the indicated damage plus 1-1/2 times the guulvorg's Strength bonus despite it being a secondary attack.

Trip (Ex) A guulvorg that hits with a bite can attempt to trip the opponent (+17 check modifier) as a free action without making a touch attack or provoking attacks of opportunity. If the attempt fails, the opponent cannot react to trip the guulvorg.

Horrifying lupine monstrosities bred for war, guulvorgs are the pride of the hobgoblin war machine. Their name means "war worg" in Goblin.

STRATEGIES AND TACTICS

Guulvorgs are cunning, tracking their quarry, guessing at their destination, and waylaying them along the path. They charge into melee and then go to work with their vicious jaws and powerful tail. Intelligent enough to take out one foe before paying attention to another, guulvorgs are still easily distracted by opponents that hurt them, focusing their ire on such adversaries. These lupines are not fools, though, and they retreat if they are losing a fight. They then bide their time to make a decisive blow when their opponents are at a disadvantage.

SAMPLE ENCOUNTER

Guulvorgs are so large and gluttonous that they don't congregate in groups larger than a mated pair in the wild. They are most numerous in goblinoid lands, where domesticated guulvorgs might be found in larger groups. Enough guulvorgs exist, however, that a few menace civilized realms. Regions plagued by these terrifying monstrosities offer a hefty bounty for the destruction of one.

Coils and Fangs (EL 14): While journeying through a dreary forest of enormous ancient trees, the characters discern the sounds of a tremendous fray nearby. Closing, they spot a guulvorg and a purple worm (*MM* 211) locked in furious battle, uprooting the trees about them in their chaotic struggle. Starving due to a lava vent that wiped out its supply of underground prey, the purple worm attacked the guulvorg out of desperate hunger. As soon as it senses the PCs, the purple worm turns to them as easier prey. The guulvorg retreats into the woods, lurking casually nearby and waiting to finish off survivors of the purple worm's attack. If the guulvorg is pulled into the battle before the purple worm dies, this encounter has an EL of 15.

ECOLOGY

No doubt the work of a goblinoid transmuter with too much time on his hands and too little sanity in his head, guulvorgs are not natural creatures. The first guulvorgs appeared only recently in goblinoid realms. Despite their magical origin, these massive lupines bred true, and a few have escaped into the wild.

GUULVORG LORE

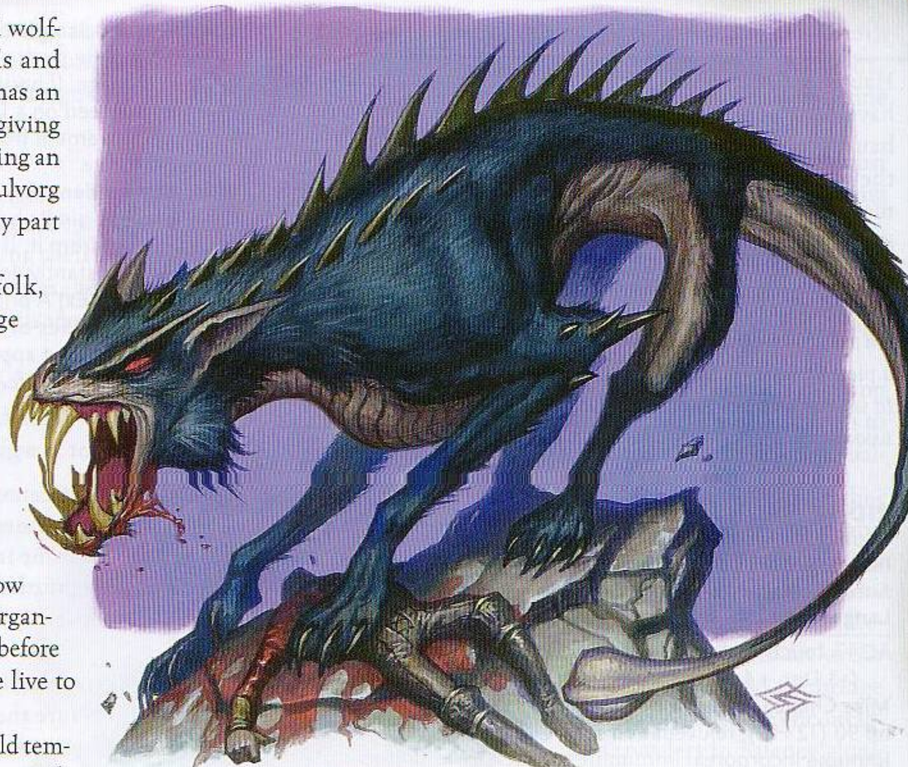
Characters who have ranks in Knowledge (nature) can learn more about guulvorgs. When a character makes a successful skill check, the following lore is revealed, including the information from lower DCs.

Knowledge (Nature)

DC	Result
23	Guulvorgs are magical beasts that are related to and as smart as worgs. These creatures are among the largest wolflike monsters in existence. Their fangs are oversized even for their huge mouths.
28	A guulvorg's tail ends in a huge bulb of hardened bone, and the beast can use this tail extremely quickly in battle.
33	Protecting it from fire and making it immune to cold, a guulvorg's blood runs boiling hot. If the creature is wounded, which is hard to do without magic weapons, its blood scalds its attacker.

Like worgs, guulvorgs are baleful wolflike creatures with cunning minds and malicious dispositions. A guulvorg has an incredibly high metabolism, its body giving off a great amount of heat and requiring an enormous quantity of food. A wild guulvorg is always on the hunt, and it eats every part of its kill.

Fortunately for good-hearted folk, guulvorgs reproduce slowly and age quickly. In the wild, numerous adult guulvorgs starve in the process of breeding and caring for their single pup. A newborn pup is the size of a normal worg, but its voracious eating allows it to grow quickly, reaching adult size within six months. A guulvorg continues to grow during its life, the oldest reaching Gargantuan size. But few live that long, dying before they reach fifteen years of age. None live to see their early twenties.



Guulvorg

Illus. by S. Prescott

Environment: Guulvorgs prefer old temperate forests where towering trees mask their enormity. Within their forest homes, they create a complex system of trails that makes it hard to track them despite their size. The tracks on the trails are convoluted and run over many times by the same creature. Those tracking a guulvorg in its home territory get no bonus due to the creature's size.

Typical Physical Characteristics: One of the largest lupine creatures in existence, the average guulvorg outclasses even the most tremendous dire wolves. They are usually 15 to 20 feet long. Reports of older males reaching 40 feet in length and standing 20 feet at the shoulder have been confirmed.

Guulvorgs look like outsized worgs. They have gray or black pelts and lupine features. Their unnatural attributes begin with the spurs of bone that jut from the creature's pelt and continue with the monster's glowing red eyes. The guulvorg's aberrant features continue with its enormous fangs, which resemble scythe blades. These teeth are too large for the guulvorg's maw and jut outward along the gums and snout.

Another oddity is the guulvorg's tail. Long and sinewy, it ends in a bulb of bone. It has a complex nervous system and musculature, allowing the guulvorg to wield it with remarkable speed and power.

Alignment: Though possessed of impressive physical might and considerable intelligence for a beast, guulvorgs are still animalistic. Guulvorgs torment their prey before the kill, and they have no mercy or empathy in them. They are usually neutral evil.

SOCIETY

Created by goblinoids, guulvorgs are still tied to that humanoid subtype. Hobgoblins maintain guulvorgs as cruel siege beasts that can clean the battlefield of its dead and keep moving. Even the richest goblinoid kings can afford to maintain only a few guulvorgs in peacetime. A few simply allow loyal guulvorgs to hunt and return home at their leisure.

Guulvorgs are highly territorial, and they obsessively defend their domains from one another and other encroachers. They willingly share territory with a single mate and worgs, treating these lesser lupine monstrosities as pups to be protected. A goblinoid settlement in which a domesticated guulvorg lives is also that guulvorg's territory, so the guulvorg defends the community fiercely.

Guulvorgs mate for life. Only if a guulvorg's mate dies does that guulvorg seek another. Although guulvorgs are nasty toward most other creatures, they are doting and self-sacrificing parents. Young guulvorgs are vicious by nature, and they learn further brutality by watching their parents.

TYPICAL TREASURE

Guulvorgs have little use for treasure, but their lairs are littered with the goods carried by their victims. They have 10% of the coins, 50% of the goods, and 50% of the items that would be standard treasure for their Challenge Rating. A guulvorg's master is likely to have more treasure than usual, since the guulvorg makes the master more able to kill and collect valuables from the fallen.

HAUNT

Haunts are spirits that left unfinished business in life and have returned to seek recompense. Victims of injustice, haunts have no qualms about causing others to suffer as they did. A haunt can't be permanently defeated by normal means, instead, someone must right the wrongs that led to its grim state.

BRIDGE HAUNT

An old man leans against the railing of the bridge ahead, whittling a piece of wood into the shape of a fish. He looks up from his work to see you and smiles as he pockets both his knife and the piece of woodwork. He begins to speak in a genial tone.

BRIDGE HAUNT — CR 7

Usually NE Medium undead (incorporeal)
Init +7; **Senses** darkvision 60 ft.; Listen +13, Spot +8
Aura unnatural (30 ft.)
Languages Common

AC 17, touch 17, flat-footed 14
(+3 Dex, +4 deflection)
Miss Chance 50% (incorporeal)
hp 90 (12 HD); rejuvenation
Immune incorporeal immunities, undead immunities
Fort +4, **Ref** +9, **Will** +9

Speed 30 ft. (6 squares), fly 30 ft. (perfect)
Melee 2 incorporeal touches +10 each (3d6 plus push)
Space 5 ft.; **Reach** 5 ft.
Base Atk +6; **Grp** —
Spell-Like Abilities (CL 12th):
3/day—*mass suggestion* (DC 20)
1/day—*mirage arcana* (DC 19)

Abilities Str —, Dex 16, Con —, Int 10, Wis 13, Cha 19
SA push, spell-like abilities, unnatural aura
SQ bridge dependent, incorporeal traits, living visage, undead traits
Feats Alertness, Improved Initiative, Improved Toughness, Lightning Reflexes, Weapon Focus (incorporeal touch)
Skills Bluff +14, Diplomacy +13, Disguise +4 (+6 acting), Hide +13, Intimidate +16, Listen +13, Sense Motive +11, Spot +8
Advancement 13–18 HD (Medium); 19–24 HD (Large)

Unnatural Aura (Su) Animals, whether wild or domesticated, can sense the unnatural presence of a bridge haunt at a distance of 30 feet. They will not willingly approach nearer than that and panic if forced to do so; they remain panicked as long as they are within range.

Rejuvenation (Su) A bridge haunt cannot be permanently destroyed through combat. The "destroyed" spirit restores itself and returns to the bridge it haunts in 1d4 days. Taking a haunt more than 1,000 feet from its bridge can destroy it, as can destroying a haunt's bridge. A bridge haunt is laid to rest by taking a piece of the corporeal remains of its former body, or a possession important to it in life, and delivering that item to the place where the creature that became the haunt was headed before its demise.

Push (Su) A creature damaged by a bridge haunt's incorporeal touch attack must succeed on a DC 20 Will save or be telekinetically pushed 10 feet away from the creature. If a bridge haunt makes a full attack, it can attack a single creature with both touch attacks, resolving the push after it is determined if both attacks deal damage. If both attacks deal damage, the creature must succeed on a DC 22 Will save or be pushed 20 feet away. Movement from a push does not provoke attacks of opportunity.

Bridge Dependent (Ex) Each bridge haunt is mystically bound to a single bridge and cannot stray more than 1,000 feet from it. If somehow forced to do so, a bridge haunt is instantly destroyed.

Living Visage (Ex) A bridge haunt seems to be corporeal and alive until it flies or attacks, when it becomes partially transparent and appears as the rotting corpse of the person it was in life.

A bridge haunt is a ghostly undead that lingers near the bridge where it came into being after the death of the living creature it once was. Embittered and vengeful, bridge haunts come in many forms, but all have the same irrational and murderous intent: They seek to lure others to their deaths.

Strategies and Tactics

Bridge haunts lure their victims into vulnerable positions in numerous ways. A haunt can use *mirage arcana* either to make its bridge look more or less stable than it truly is, or to make the terrain below appear more or less dangerous. A bridge haunt uses *mass suggestion* only if it must, since it prefers unwitting victims. It can use the spell to cause a whole group to stumble into danger or to prevent the remainder of the group from coming to a single member's aid. In combat, a bridge haunt attacks with its incorporeal touch

BRIDGE HAUNT LORE

Characters who have ranks in Knowledge (religion) can learn more about bridge haunts. When a character makes a successful skill check, the following lore is revealed, including the information from lower DCs. If the bridge haunt has not yet revealed that it is not alive and not corporeal, increase all DCs by 10.

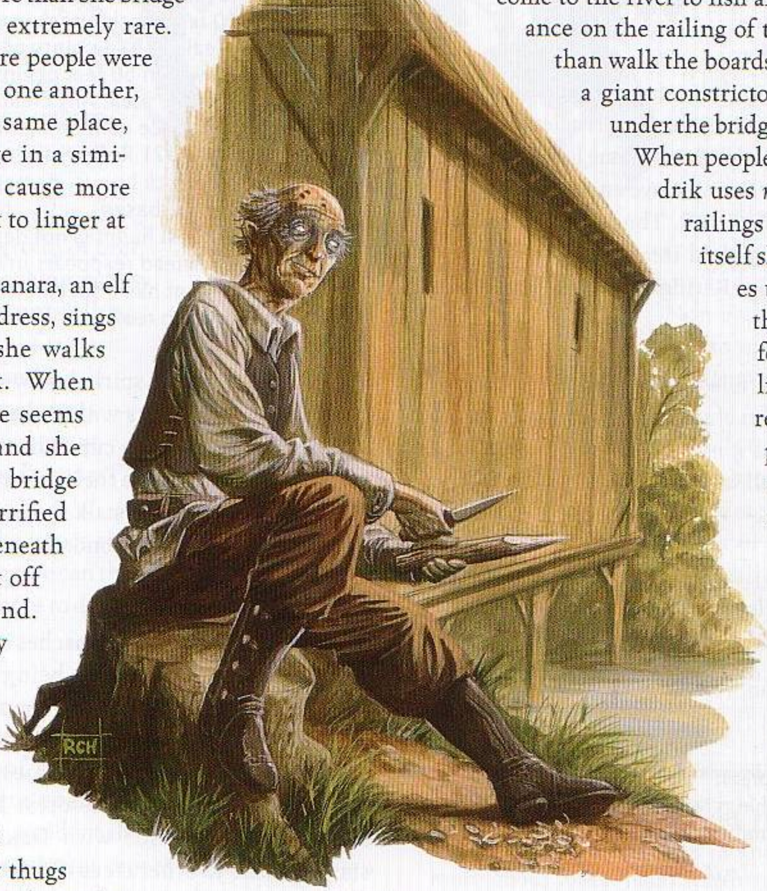
Knowledge (Religion)

DC	Result
17	This is a bridge haunt, the incorporeal spirit of someone who died at this bridge.
22	In combat, a bridge haunt can push its opponents off the bridge. Its incorporeal touch also disrupts flesh.
27	Masters of deception through magical trickery, bridge haunts can change the appearance of their bridge or nearby terrain. They can make their words seem true to all who hear them.
32	A bridge haunt can be destroyed only if it is moved more than 1,000 feet from its bridge, if its bridge is destroyed, or if a piece of its former body is delivered to the location to which it was traveling when it died. Otherwise, it returns in a few days.

attacks, hoping to push foes off the bridge if doing so can result in a deadly fall. It does the same to continually push a foe deeper beneath the water near a bridge that crosses a river or deep creek.

Sample Encounters

A bridge haunt seeks to cause deaths in the manner it was killed and prevent others from reaching their destinations across the bridge. Bridge haunts appear as they did in life, so their shapes and the means by which they lure victims vary greatly.



Bridge haunt

Illus. by R. Horsley

Because each bridge haunt is tied to a bridge, and each has a different reason for being there, finding more than one bridge haunt at a location is extremely rare. However, if two or more people were emotionally bound to one another, were traveling to the same place, and died near a bridge in a similar manner, this can cause more than one bridge haunt to linger at a single bridge.

The Bride (EL 7): Lanara, an elf maiden in a beautiful dress, sings a mournful song as she walks along the riverbank. When someone hails her, she seems startled and scared, and she runs under a nearby bridge to hide. Suddenly, a terrified scream comes from beneath the bridge, then is cut off by a strangling sound. Elves or females of any race who investigate find Lanara waiting to push them beneath the water to drown.

Lanara was murdered on her wedding day by thugs sent by her husband-to-be so he could marry another. She can be permanently destroyed only by finding her wedding ring in the mud beneath the bridge and bringing it to her once-fiancé, or by bringing him to her.

The Wrestler (EL 7): Thaven Firehammer, a dwarf paladin of Kord, challenges warriors who wish to cross his bridge across a mountain chasm. He awaits victims at the middle of the bridge and offers a friendly challenge to one person in the group: a wrestling match. If he wins, they cannot cross. If he loses, he offers his full plate armor and weapon in addition to passage. He seems to lack a weapon, but he says he left his axe on the other side of the bridge. Anyone who takes his offer or tries to pass him suffers his wrath as he tries to push that person off the bridge. Once he has succeeded, Thaven moves inside the bridge until someone else comes along.

To free Thaven and end his deadly game, the PCs must find his bones in the rocky vale below the bridge and bring them to the temple of Kord in the mountains. Alternatively, they can seek his magic axe, taken from him by the man who pushed him off the bridge during what was supposed to be a friendly challenge, and return it to the side of the bridge where Thaven left it when he wrestled his foe.

The Fisher and the Serpent (EL 8): Cedrik, a young human boy with a fishing pole and fish basket, used to come to the river to fish all the time. He would balance on the railing of the bridge to cross, rather than walk the boards. One day he slipped, and a giant constrictor snake (*MM* 280) living under the bridge made short work of him. When people approach the bridge, Cedrik uses *mirage arcana* to make the railings look solid and the bridge itself shoddy. Then he encourages travelers to balance along the railing—they can even follow him across if they like. When someone has reached the center, Cedrik pushes that person off the bridge into the waiting coils of the snake.

Cedrik can be permanently destroyed by taking one of his fishhooks from inside the snake's belly and bringing the hook to the boy's former home.

Ecology

Bridge haunts have little effect on the nearby ecology, but they do possess an ecology of sorts in their choice of prey and the frequency of their attacks. Many bridge haunts seem content to set upon anyone who wanders their way, while others show a preference for certain types of victims. Some bridge haunts linger near their bridges continually, while others rest inside the structure of the bridge, emerging on certain nights or at particular times during the day. Each bridge haunt has its own habits, so discovering its patterns requires observation.

Environment: A bridge haunt can exist at a bridge in any environment. Unless an appealing target is nearby, the haunt doesn't leave its bridge.

Typical Physical Characteristics: Bridge haunts have the height and appearance they possessed in life. Being incorporeal, they are weightless.

Alignment: Bridge haunts are usually neutral evil, but some are chaotic or lawful if they possessed strong tendencies toward one or the other of those alignments in life. Good bridge haunts are unheard of, but neutral haunts do exist.

Neutral bridge haunts attempt to keep people away from their bridges, scaring them away or warning them off. To those who show sympathy, such haunts relate how they can be freed to go to their eternal rest. Still, even a neutral bridge haunt is compelled to kill those who try to cross its bridge.

Typical Treasure

Bridge haunts cannot manipulate treasure, nor do they typically show any desire to possess it. Nevertheless, a bridge haunt's victims often bore items that become lost beneath the bridge, awaiting discovery by any brave enough to confront the structure's undead inhabitant. The items beneath the bridge are equivalent to standard treasure for a creature of the bridge haunt's Challenge Rating.

FOREST HAUNT

A shimmering form emerges from the woods, looking like a dead tree with purplish-green veins of sap winding across its surface. It crashes its way forward as if moving large obstacles from its path, but it glides through all such impediments as if they were mere illusions.

FOREST HAUNT CR 10

Usually NE Huge undead (incorporeal)
Init +0; **Senses** darkvision 60 ft., low-light vision; Listen +18, Spot +18
Languages Common, Sylvan, Treant

AC 11, touch 11, flat-footed 11
(–2 size, +3 deflection)
Miss Chance 50% (incorporeal)
hp 78 (12 HD); **DR** 10/slashing; rejuvenation
Immune incorporeal immunities, undead immunities
Resist +2 turn resistance
Fort +4, **Ref** +4, **Will** +13
Weakness vulnerability to fire

Speed fly 30 ft. (perfect) (6 squares)
Melee incorporeal touch +5 (1d4 Cha)
Space 15 ft.; **Reach** 15 ft.
Base Atk +6; **Grp** —
Special Actions arboreal vengeance, Daunting Presence (DC 19)

Abilities Str —, Dex 10, Con —, Int 12, Wis 16, Cha 16
SA arboreal vengeance
SQ incorporeal traits, undead traits
Feats Ability Focus (arboreal vengeance), Daunting Presence*, Iron Will, Track, Weapon Focus (incorporeal touch)
* New feat; see sidebar.
Skills Hide +7, Listen +18, Move Silently +15, Spot +18, Survival +18
Advancement 13–30 HD (Huge)

Arboreal Vengeance (Su) A forest haunt can temporarily animate trees and undergrowth around it. When it activates this ability, each tree within 60 feet makes a melee attack against the nearest enemy. Trees have a reach of 20 feet. Each attack is made with a +9 bonus and deals 2d6+4 points of damage. In addition, undergrowth within 60 feet begins to writhe and grasp at creatures in the area. Any creature attempting to move out of a space containing undergrowth must succeed on a DC 21 Reflex save or be entangled for 1 round. The attack bonus, damage bonus, and save DC are Charisma-based.

Rejuvenation A forest haunt is not destroyed if reduced to 0 hit points. It instead reappears in its grove 1d4 days later. Each forest haunt has a specific condition that must be fulfilled to lay it to rest.

Forest haunts are the spirits of fey-touched trees that seek vengeance on intruders within their forest domain. When a dryad is killed, she can curse those who slew her with her dying breath. This curse fuels the spirit of the oak to which she is tied, causing it to stalk the forest until her killers are slain, and sometimes beyond.

Strategies and Tactics

A forest haunt silently approaches enemies, staying within the cover of trees to avoid being noticed. Even if it is seen, it is typically mistaken for a trick of the light or a play of shadow in the forest. Once it is in range, it uses arboreal vengeance to batter foes that stand near trees. If an opponent spots the forest haunt, the haunt tries to intimidate that foe with Daunting Presence, while staying close to other trees so that opponents must come into range of the trees' attacks if they wish to fight the haunt directly. It uses its touch attack only if it is severely damaged. Since it knows it can rejuvenate, a forest haunt fights until destroyed.

NEW FEAT: DAUNTING PRESENCE

You are skilled at inducing fear in your opponents.

Prerequisites: Cha 13, base attack bonus +1.

Benefit: You can take a standard action to awe an opponent. The opponent must be within 30 feet, have line of sight to you, and have an Intelligence score. If the opponent fails a Will saving throw (DC 10 + 1/2 your character level + your Cha modifier), it is shaken for 10 minutes. This feat has no effect on a creature that is already shaken.

Special: A fighter can select Daunting Presence as one of his fighter bonus feats.

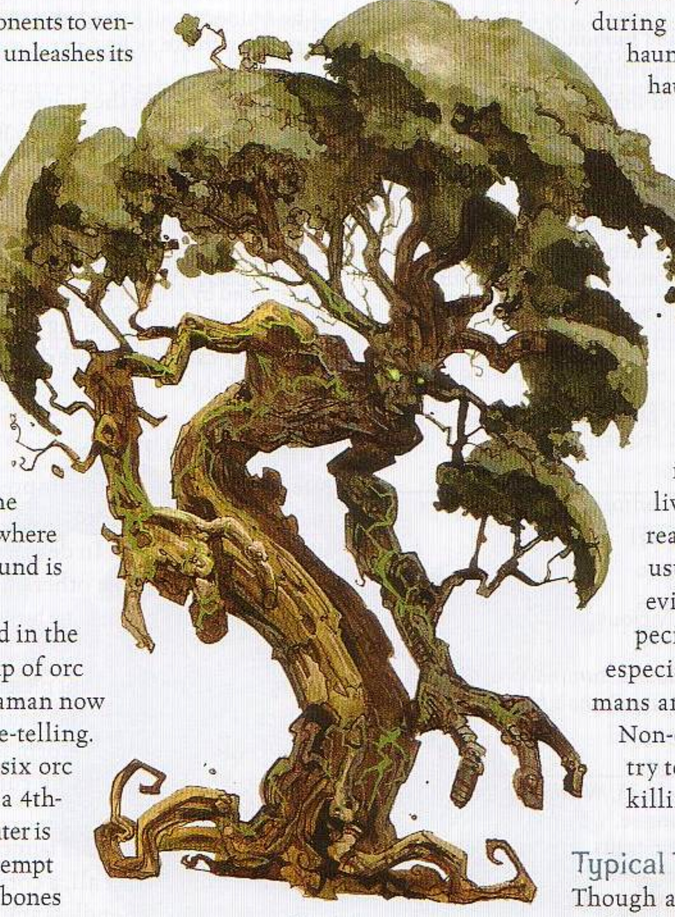
Sample Encounters

A forest haunt waits for opponents to venture into the forest before it unleashes its vengeance. Only rarely does more than one of these creatures appear in a given area, and groups larger than four are unheard of.

Orc Murderers (EL 10): A group of trappers has been missing for several days, and the trail leads into a dark, forbidding part of a nearby wood. A forest haunt rampages in the deepest part of the wood, where trees are thick and the ground is covered in underbrush.

The dryad that once lived in the wood was killed by a group of orc marauders, and the orc shaman now uses her bones for fortune-telling. The marauders consist of six orc berserkers (*MM4* 114) and a 4th-level orc druid. This encounter is EL 10, but PCs can also attempt to negotiate for the dryad's bones or steal them.

Only by retrieving the bones and returning them to the dryad's grove can the PCs put the forest haunt to rest. Of course, they have to deal with an irate forest haunt on the way to the grove.



Forest haunt

Ecology

Forest haunts are subject to outbursts of rage as they try to cope with the loss of their dryad companions. Thus, although a forest haunt coexists with natural flora, it tends to drive away or accidentally kill most wildlife. A recently awakened forest haunt causes a steady migration away from its grove, a clear indication that something is wrong. The area roamed by a forest haunt might eventually begin to change. As the unnatural aura of the haunt bleeds into the surrounding terrain, it turns the foliage a dark—almost black—green and causes trees to warp into unsettling shapes.

A forest haunt can be destroyed only by meeting a particular condition. This condition can range from returning the body of its dryad to her grove, to defeating an evil power at work in the forest, to destroying the tree from which the forest haunt sprang.

Environment: Forest haunts are found exclusively in forests. A forest haunt roams throughout the forest as though on patrol, but returns to its dryad's grove at least once every day. Some roam during the night and some during the daytime. Chaotic forest haunts vary this pattern, but neutral haunts are more predictable.

Typical Physical Characteristics: A forest haunt appears to be a deformed, translucent tree, with a trunk nearly 5 feet wide and a span of branches greater than 20 feet. It has veins of violet sap running along its trunk.

Alignment: A forest haunt is interested in nothing but the destruction of the living, and most are difficult to reason with. Forest haunts are usually neutral evil or chaotic evil, though some are neutral (especially those whose dryads were especially sympathetic toward humans and other civilized intruders). Non-evil forest haunts are likely to try to scare off invaders instead of killing them outright.

Typical Treasure

Though a forest haunt doesn't care for wealth, the area it roams might be littered with the gear of those who did not escape its wrath. Such treasure is usually the arms, armor, or other equipment associated with would-be heroes. The scattered treasure can also serve as a warning to any who would enter the forest haunt's domain. Such items add up to standard treasure for the forest haunt's Challenge Rating.

FOREST HAUNT LORE

Characters who have ranks in Knowledge (nature) can learn more about forest haunts. When a character makes a successful skill check, the following lore is revealed, including the information from lower DCs.

Knowledge (Religion)

DC	Result
20	This is a forest haunt, the spirit of a tree touched by the fey. When a dryad is destroyed and speaks a curse with her dying breath, a forest haunt is born. It is incorporeal, but nonetheless it can be harmed more easily by slashing weapons.
25	A forest haunt can animate nearby trees to attack its enemies.
30	A forest haunt can be destroyed only if a specific condition is met. Otherwise, it returns to existence in a few days.

Illus. by C. Critchlow

TAUNTING HAUNT

The spectral image of a short, rotund human wearing a tattered jester's outfit appears before you. It bursts into laughter and points at you. Its laughter grows so violent that it falls to the floor, still laughing and pointing.

TAUNTING HAUNT **CR 4**
Usually CN Medium undead (incorporeal)
Init +6; **Senses** darkvision 60 ft.; Listen +5, Spot +4
Languages Common

AC 14, touch 14, flat-footed 12
(+2 Dex, +2 deflection)
Miss Chance 50% (incorporeal)
hp 39 (6 HD); encore
Immune incorporeal immunities, undead immunities
Resist +2 turn resistance
Fort +2, **Ref** +4, **Will** +5

Speed fly 40 ft. (perfect)
Melee incorporeal touch +5 (1 Cha)
Space 5 ft.; **Reach** 5 ft.
Base Atk +3; **Grp** —
Special Actions tripping tongue, vicious lampoon
Spell-Like Abilities (CL 6th):
At will—*daze* (DC 12), *ghost sound, summon instrument*
3/day—*grease* (DC 13), *invisibility, Tasha's hideous laughter* (DC 13)
1/day—*fear* (DC 16), *glibness*

Abilities Str —, Dex 14, Con —, Int 13, Wis 11, Cha 15
SA spell-like abilities, tripping tongue, vicious lampoon
SQ font of knowledge, incorporeal traits, undead traits
Feats Dodge, Improved Initiative, Skill Focus (Perform [comedy])
Skills Bluff +11, Diplomacy +13, Disguise +2 (+4 acting), Intimidate +13, Knowledge (all) +10, Listen +5, Perform (comedy) +14, Spot +4
Advancement 7–12 HD (Medium)

Encore (Ex) Fueled by anger and bitterness, a taunting haunt is difficult to send to its final rest. A taunting haunt that is destroyed by any means returns to existence after 24 hours. These creatures can be driven away only when defeated in a battle of wits or put to rest only when their final wishes are met (see below).

Tripping Tongue (Su) A taunting haunt can force an opponent to speak the opposite of an intended statement. An entreaty for peace becomes a challenge to battle. A friendly greeting becomes an insulting threat. Three times per day, as an immediate action, a taunting haunt can attempt to reverse an opponent's intended words. If that foe succeeds on a DC 15 Will save, this ability has no effect. Anyone listening to a creature affected by this ability can make a DC 15 Sense Motive check to notice that the affected creature has been compelled to speak unintended words. The save DC is Charisma-based. This is a mind-affecting ability.

Vicious Lampoon (Su) When an opponent within 30 feet misses with an attack, a taunting haunt can, as an immediate action, deliver a short, scathing commentary on that foe's competence (or lack thereof). The subject must succeed on a DC 15 Will save or take a –2 penalty on attack rolls, ability checks, and skill checks for 1 round. The save DC is Charisma-based.

Font of Knowledge (Ex) A taunting haunt is considered to be trained in all Knowledge skills and to have maximum ranks in those skills.

A taunting haunt is the twisted, jealous spirit of a deceased bard, jester, or other performer. Bitter and angry, and resentful of the living, a taunting haunt uses its sharp wit, cruel humor, and spiteful performances to create havoc and chaos wherever it goes.

Taunting haunts pose a minimal physical threat, yet they are dreaded by almost anyone unfortunate enough to encounter them. With their biting sense of humor and relentless spirit, they can prove more difficult to handle than foes in a stand-up fight.

Strategies and Tactics

A taunting haunt exists to spread misery, anger, and confusion. In life, it used its talents to bring happiness and amusement to others. In death, this desire has warped into a compulsion to make others miserable. Taunting haunts use a variety of schemes to humiliate the foolish, trusting, or greedy.

A typical taunting haunt picks out an important figure for continual harassment. The haunt introduces itself, insults its mark, and uses its Perform (comedy) skill to poke fun. It follows its target, offering running commentary on that person's ineptitude.

Not a murderous spirit, a taunting haunt takes care to avoid killing anyone. After all, a corpse can't wince at a barbed comment or provide endless amusement as it tries to muddle through negotiations while its words are being twisted. A taunting haunt might even help particularly enjoyable victims of its torments stay alive.

TAUNTING HAUNT LORE

Characters who have ranks in Knowledge (religion) or who have the bardic knowledge class feature can learn more about taunting haunts. When a character makes a successful check, the following lore is revealed, including the information from lower DCs. A bard gains a +4 bonus on this check.

Knowledge (Religion) or Bardic Knowledge

DC	Result
14	This is a taunting haunt, the bitter spirit of a troubadour, jester, or bard. This result reveals all undead traits and incorporeal traits.
19	When a taunting haunt decides to shadow a victim, it can cause that person to speak the opposite of what is intended.
24	Taunting haunts are expert liars. Never believe what one says unless you defeat it in a battle of wits.
29	A taunting haunt can be defeated only if it loses a battle of wits or its final wishes are met. Otherwise, it returns within a day.

Taunting haunts are roleplaying challenges. They can prove annoying, but they lack attacks or abilities to directly kill. Their immortal nature and access to Knowledge skills makes them useful sources of (perhaps unreliable) information.

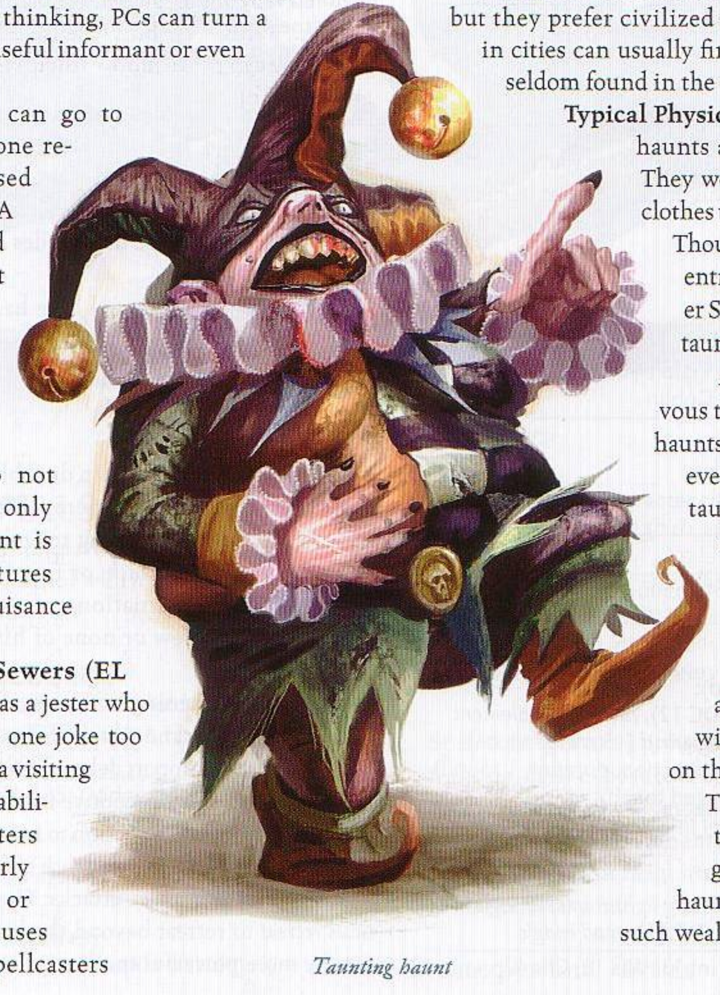
Each taunting haunt is an individual with a distinct—often warped or crazy—personality. A haunt might take a liking to a PC, egg on another one with taunts, and needle another with endless pranks. In the hands of a skilled DM, a haunt becomes a foil for the characters. With good roleplaying and quick thinking, PCs can turn a taunting haunt into a useful informant or even an ally.

A taunting haunt can go to its final rest if someone resolves whatever caused it to become undead. A wandering bard killed by a cruel tyrant might pass on if a party overthrows the tyrant's descendants.

Sample Encounter

Taunting haunts do not travel in groups. The only time a taunting haunt is seen with other creatures is when it is being a nuisance to them.

The Staff of the Sewers (EL 4): Bertrose Bignose was a jester who was killed for making one joke too many at the expense of a visiting archmage. He uses his abilities to make spellcasters look foolish, particularly in front of superiors or allies. If possible, he uses *glibness* to convince spellcasters he is a friendly spirit who knows the location of a lost magic staff. Invariably, this staff is supposedly hidden at the bottom of a garbage dump or outhouse pit. More than one greedy wizard has ended up knee deep in sewage before Bertrose revealed his lie.



Taunting haunt

Illus. by M. Coimbra

Ecology

Taunting haunts add nothing to the local ecosystem except cruel humor, practical jokes, and humiliating schemes.

Environment: Taunting haunts can thrive anywhere, but they prefer civilized areas. Those that used to live in cities can usually find easy targets there. They are seldom found in the wilderness.

Typical Physical Characteristics: Taunting haunts are humanoid in appearance. They wear outrageous or ostentatious clothes to draw attention to themselves. Though the taunting haunt in this entry is Medium, gnomes and other Small creatures can also become taunting haunts.

Alignment: More mischievous than malicious, most taunting haunts can't be considered evil. However, exceptions exist, and some taunting haunts are even good-aligned. They are, without exception, chaotic.

Typical Treasure

A taunting haunt requires anyone it defeats in a battle of wits to bury all treasure wagered on the outcome in an isolated spot. These haunts have no use for treasure, but since mortals love gold and magic items, taunting haunts do what they can to remove such wealth from circulation.

A BATTLE OF WITS

The only way to defeat a taunting haunt is in a battle of wits. Usually, a victim gets rid of a haunt when it grows bored and moves on to a new audience. Adventurers who turn or destroy the spirit win the honor of a repeat performance soon thereafter.

A battle of wits with a taunting haunt involves riddles, jokes, and other competitions. In game terms, the haunt and its opponent take turns choosing Knowledge and Perform skills, then make opposed checks involving the chosen skill. The first person to win three checks wins the competition.

A haunt expects a magic item worth 500 gp from the PCs if it wins. If the characters win, the haunt leads them to a hidden treasure with a value appropriate to its CR and agrees to leave them alone.

When resolving a battle of wits, you can replace the skill checks with riddles and questions for an interesting roleplaying encounter. Regardless of how you handle the battle, the PCs should gain experience points for defeating a taunting haunt whether they drive it off, send it against someone else, or otherwise remove it as an annoyance.

HOBGOBLIN

Hobgoblins are brutal and disciplined evil humanoids that form highly organized, conquest-driven kingdoms. They also willingly serve as mercenaries for other evil creatures.

This section presents four sample members of hobgoblin society and expands on the social order of these creatures. Hobgoblins are so ruthless in their training that the process alters their bodies. The results are nothing short of monstrous.

Hobgoblin traits are summarized on page 154 of the *Monster Manual*.

HOBGOBLIN DUSKBLADE

A hobgoblin clad in a chain shirt marches toward you. He holds his longsword out threateningly, and his shield is covered in runes.

HOBGOBLIN DUSKBLADE CR 3

Male hobgoblin duskblade* 3
* Class described in *PH2*
LE Medium humanoid (goblinoid)
Init +2; **Senses** darkvision 60 ft.; Listen +0, Spot +0
Languages Common, Draconic, Goblin

AC 19, touch 12, flat-footed 17
(+2 Dex, +5 armor, +2 shield)
hp 26 (3 HD)
Fort +6, **Ref** +3, **Will** +3

Speed 30 ft. (6 squares)
Melee mwk longsword +7 (1d8+2)
Ranged longbow +5 (1d8)
Base Atk +3; **Grp** +5
Atk Options arcane channeling
Duskblade Spells Known (CL 3rd):
1st (5/day)—*burning hands* (DC 12), *ray of enfeeblement* (+5 ranged touch), *shocking grasp* (+5 melee touch), *swift expeditious retreat* (swift action, duration 1 round)
0 (5/day)—*acid splash* (+5 ranged touch), *ray of frost* (+5 ranged touch), *touch of fatigue* (+5 melee touch, DC 11)
Spell-Like Abilities (CL 3rd):
Combined total of 4/day—*dancing lights, detect magic, flare* (DC 11), *ghost sound* (DC 11), *read magic*

Abilities Str 15, Dex 14, Con 16, Int 13, Wis 10, Cha 8
SQ armored mage
Feats Battle Magic Tactics*, Combat Casting^{B}, Weapon Focus (longsword)
* New feat; see sidebar.
Skills Concentration +9, Listen +0, Move Silently +5, Ride +8, Spellcraft +7, Spot +0
Possessions *+1 chain shirt, +1 light steel shield,* masterwork longsword, longbow with 20 arrows

Arcane Channeling (Su) A hobgoblin duskblade can cast and deliver any touch spell he knows with a melee attack. The spell must have a casting time of 1 standard action or less. Casting a spell in this manner does not provoke attacks of opportunity. If he hits, the hobgoblin duskblade deals normal weapon damage, then resolves the spell's effect on the struck creature.

Armored Mage (Ex) A hobgoblin duskblade does not have an arcane spell failure chance when wearing light armor and carrying a light shield.

Hobgoblin duskblades are skilled warriors who learn to combine armed fighting and spellcasting. Ages ago, a mighty hobgoblin wizard named Tartak Firehand stole such techniques from his elf enemies. Now a large number of hobgoblin tribes use duskblades to support wizards and sorcerers in battle.

The duskblade presented here had the following ability scores before racial ability score adjustments: Str 15, Dex 12, Con 14, Int 13, Wis 10, Cha 8.

Strategies and Tactics

Before engaging, hobgoblin duskblades use *ray of enfeeblement* to soften up the enemy. They then enter melee and use arcane channeling to imbue their attacks with *shocking grasp, acid splash,* or *ray of frost. Burning hands* is reserved for tight situations when one hobgoblin duskblade endangers few or none of his comrades by casting the 15-foot cone.

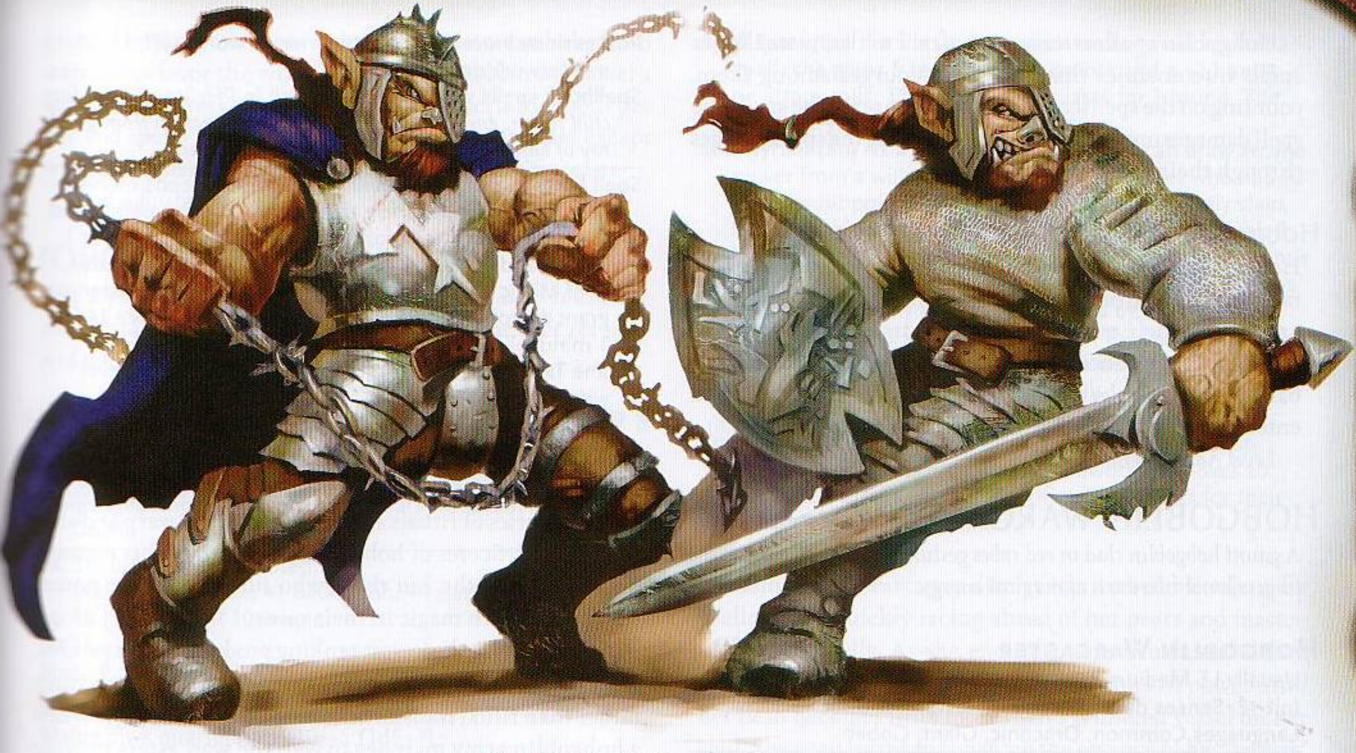
If they're weakening an enemy for subsequent magical attack by other arcane casters, hobgoblin duskblades or the spellcasters they support delay or ready their actions in melee so that they act on consecutive initiative counts, preventing the enemy from taking action to foil their combined attacks. Hobgoblin duskblades use *touch of fatigue* and Battle Magic Tactics with their melee attacks. They then cast *swift expeditious retreat* to retreat beyond the blast radius of area spells cast by more powerful spellcasters.

NEW FEAT: BATTLE MAGIC TACTICS

Through intense training and impeccable timing, you and your allies learn to augment each other's magical attacks when you focus your efforts on a single target.

Prerequisites: Spellcraft 6 ranks, arcane caster level 3rd.

Benefit: Each time you cast a spell that requires the target to make a saving throw, that target gains a Battle Magic Tactics token after the spell resolves. A creature gains a token whether the save succeeds or fails, but a creature that avoids a spell through spell resistance does not gain a token. Each Battle Magic Tactics token imposes a cumulative –1 penalty on saving throws against the spells of spellcasters that have this feat. At the end of each round, all Battle Magic Tactics tokens disappear.



Hobgoblin duskblade and spellscourge

Illus. by R. Spears

HOBGOBLIN SPELLSCOURGE

The scars of old burns and healed wounds cover this hobgoblin. His breastplate is battered but etched with a single rune. He whirls a barbed chain about him.

Hobgoblin Spellscourge CR 5

Usually LE Medium monstrous humanoid (goblinoid)
Init +2; **Senses** darkvision 60 ft.; Listen +1, Spot +1
Languages Common, Goblin

AC 17, touch 12, flat-footed 15; Dodge, Mobility
(+2 Dex, +5 armor)
hp 41 (5 HD)
Fort +5, **Ref** +7, **Will** +7; +2 against spells, spell eater

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Speed 30 ft. (6 squares)
Melee *+1 spiked chain* +9 (2d4+5)
Space 5 ft.; **Reach** 5 ft. (10 ft. with spiked chain)
Base Atk +5; **Grp** +8

Abilities Str 16, Dex 15, Con 16, Int 10, Wis 12, Cha 8
Feats Dodge, Iron Will^{B}, Mage Slayer*, Mobility
* New feat; see sidebar.
Skills Jump +9, Knowledge (arcana) +3, Listen +1, Move Silently +5, Spellcraft +3, Spot +1, Tumble +8
Advancement by character class; **Favored Class** fighter
Possessions *+1 chain shirt, +1 spiked chain, cloak of resistance +1*

Spell Eater (Su) If a hobgoblin spellscourge succeeds on his save against a spell, he gains 5 temporary hit points and a +2 bonus on attack rolls. The attack bonus lasts for 1 round, and the temporary hit points last for 1 minute.

Spellscourges are elite soldiers. They undergo intensive training, daily exposure to spells, and cruel rituals, granting them special defenses against magic. In war, spellscourges race forward to slay enemy spellcasters. When rivalries among hobgoblin mages turn violent, spellscourges serve as choice assassins.

Strategies and Tactics

A spellscourge engages spellcasters, particularly lightly armored or unarmored ones, shutting them down in a wide area using his spiked chain. He uses Mobility and Tumble to get into position to accomplish this goal.

NEW FEAT: MAGE SLAYER

You have studied the ways and weaknesses of spellcasters and can time your attacks and defenses against them expertly.

Prerequisites: Spellcraft 2 ranks, base attack bonus +3.

Benefit: You gain a +1 bonus on Will saves. Spellcasters you threaten cannot cast defensively (they automatically fail their Concentration checks to do so), but they are aware that they cannot cast defensively while being threatened by you.

Special: Taking this feat reduces your caster level for all your spells and spell-like abilities by 4.

Hobgoblin spellcasters aren't afraid to throw weak area spells into enemies that have spellscourges among them, counting on the spellscourges' defenses to resist the spell. The spell damages opponents while augmenting the spellscourges through their spell eater ability.

Hobgoblin Spellscourges as Characters

Hobgoblin spellscourges are elite creatures that have the racial characteristics of hobgoblins, along with the abilities granted by their grueling ritualistic training. The typical spellscourge advances as a fighter, but some tribes train barbarians or monks with these abilities. Spellscourges often enter the occult slayer prestige class (*Complete Warrior* 66).

Level Adjustment: +2.

HOBGOBLIN WARCASTER

A gaunt hobgoblin clad in red robes gestures toward you. From his fingers lance two darts of magical energy.

Hobgoblin Warcaster **CR 4**

Usually LE Medium monstrous humanoid (goblinoid)
Init +2; **Senses** darkvision 60 ft.; Listen +0, Spot +5
Languages Common, Draconic, Giant, Goblin

AC 15, touch 12, flat-footed 13
(+2 Dex, +1 armor, +2 natural)
hp 33 (4 HD); **DR** 5/magic
SR 14
Fort +4, **Ref** +6, **Will** +6; +2 against spells, spell eater

Speed 30 ft. (6 squares)
Melee mwk staff +4 (1d6–1)
Ranged mwk dagger +7 (1d4–1)
Space 5 ft.; **Reach** 5 ft.
Base Atk +4; **Grp** +3
Atk Options magic strike
Special Actions pillar of magic
Wizard Spells Prepared (CL 4th):
2nd—*false life, flaming sphere* (DC 15), *web* (DC 15)
1st—*expeditious retreat, magic missile* (2), *shield*
0—*daze* (DC 13), *flare* (DC 13), *resistance, read magic*
Spell-Like Abilities (CL 4th):
At will—*detect magic*

Abilities Str 8, Dex 15, Con 16, Int 16, Wis 10, Cha 12
SA magic strike, pillar of magic, spell-like abilities, spells
SQ arcane talent
Feats Battle Magic Tactics*, Combat Casting, Iron Will^{B}
* New feat; see sidebar, page 84.
Skills Concentration +9 (+13 casting defensively), Intimidate +7, Knowledge (arcana) +9, Listen +0, Move Silently +6, Spellcraft +11, Spot +5
Advancement by character class; **Favored Class** wizard
Possessions *bracers of armor +1*, masterwork staff, 3 masterwork daggers
Spellbook spells prepared plus 0—all in *PH;* 1st—*cause fear, chill touch, endure elements, mount, protection from good, ray of enfeeblement;* 2nd—*ghoul touch, scare*

Spell Eater (Su) If a hobgoblin warcaster succeeds on his save against a spell, he gains 5 temporary hit points and a +2 bonus on attack rolls. The attack bonus lasts for 1 round, and the temporary hit points last for 1 minute.

Pillar of Magic (Su) Once per day, a hobgoblin warcaster can grant all goblinoids within 30 feet spell resistance 14 for 1 minute.

Arcane Talent (Ex) A warcaster casts spells as a 4th-level wizard.

Warcasters are elite casters trained specifically for warfare. The most promising young hobgoblin arcane casters endure a grueling series of rituals and tests that slowly warp and alter their bodies. Scores of hobgoblins exposed to this regimen die hideous deaths, but those who survive become potent spellcasters with magic in their veins.

Warcasters are the lowest-ranking products of this process. They consider those who gained arcane skill through study rather than ritual transformation to be lesser beings. When a hobgoblin army marches to war, the warcasters provide artillery support. They also work with spellscourges and duskblades to target and destroy enemy spellcasters.

Strategies and Tactics

Warcasters use *false life* to fortify themselves before a battle begins. Just prior to engaging the enemy, they use *shield* to defend themselves while the spellscourges and duskblades they lead move into position. Warcasters are acutely aware that they have no more than four or five spells to contribute to a fight, so they hold back until they've gauged their opponents' defenses. They unleash their magic with precision against targets that duskblades have set up with the Battle Magic Tactics feat.

A warcaster targets an area, preferably where duskblades have softened up the enemy, with *web*. He then rolls a *flaming sphere* into trapped creatures, dealing more damage in the process as the fire interacts with the magical webbing. He uses *magic missile* to finish off those who look badly injured, then casts *expeditious retreat* to leave the battlefield.

Hobgoblin Warcasters as Characters

All hobgoblin warcasters are elite creatures that have the racial characteristics of hobgoblins, as well as the abilities

MONSTROUS HUMANOID (GOBLINOID)

The gruesome rituals and training that some of the hobgoblins in this entry go through changes their type to monstrous humanoid. This means they're immune to abilities that affect only humanoids. However, abilities that affect creatures with the goblinoid subtype still affect these creatures despite their new type. So a ranger who has humanoid (goblinoid) as a favored enemy still receives the bonuses that ability provides when using it against the monstrous humanoid goblinoids presented here.

granted by their torturous upbringing. However, hobgoblin warcasters favor the wizard class. A hobgoblin warcaster's wizard levels stack with his Hit Dice to determine spells per day and spells contained in his spellbook. No class except wizard is considered associated for a hobgoblin warcaster.

Level Adjustment: +3.

HOBGOBLIN WARSOUL

Like an undead creature, this hobgoblin is incredibly emaciated, and her skin is pulled tight across her bony frame. Her red robes and staff mark her as a spellcaster of some sort.

HOBGOBLIN WARSOUL CR 8

Usually LE Medium monstrous humanoid (goblinoid)
Init +7; **Senses** darkvision 60 ft.; Listen +8, Spot +10
Languages Common, Draconic, Dwarven, Elven, Giant, Goblin

AC 20, touch 14, flat-footed 17
(+3 Dex, +2 armor, +1 deflection, +4 natural)
hp 88 (10 HD); **DR** 10/magic
SR 18
Fort +9, **Ref** +12, **Will** +13; +2 against spells, spell eater

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Speed 30 ft. (6 squares)
Melee mwk quarterstaff +10/+5 (1d6–1)
Ranged mwk dagger +14/+9 (1d4–1)
Space 5 ft.; **Reach** 5 ft.
Base Atk +10; **Grp** +9
Atk Options magic strike
Special Actions soul tyrant
Combat Gear *brooch of shielding, potion of cure serious wounds*
Wizard Spells Prepared (CL 9th):
5th—*cone of cold* (DC 21), *hold monster* (DC 20)
4th—*dimension door, shout* (DC 20), *wall of ice*
3rd—*dispel magic, fireball* (DC 19), *haste, lightning bolt* (DC 19)
2nd—*false life, flaming sphere* (DC 18), *scorching ray* (+14 ranged touch), *shatter* (DC 18), *web* (DC 17)
1st—*expeditious retreat, grease* (DC 16), *mage armor, magic missile* (2), *shield*
0—*daze* (DC 15), *flare* (DC 16), *resistance, read magic*
Spell-Like Abilities (CL 9th):
At will—*detect magic*

Abilities Str 8, Dex 16, Con 18, Int 21, Wis 14, Cha 15
SA magic strike, soul tyrant, spell-like abilities, spells
SQ arcane talent, cult of power
Feats Battle Magic Tactics*, Combat Casting, Improved Initiative, Iron Will^B, Spell Focus (evocation)
* New feat; see sidebar, page 84.
Skills Concentration +17 (+21 casting defensively), Diplomacy +8, Intimidate +15, Knowledge (arcana) +17, Listen +8, Move Silently +8, Spellcraft +20, Spot +10
Advancement by character class; **Favored Class** wizard
Possessions combat gear plus *bracers of armor +2, ring of protection +1*, masterwork staff, 3 masterwork daggers, *cloak of resistance +2*
Spellbook spells prepared plus 0—all in *PH;* 1st—*cause fear, chill touch, endure elements, mount, protection from good, ray of enfeeblement;* 2nd—*detect thoughts, ghoul touch, scare, whispering wind;* 3rd—*clairaudience/clairvoyance, tongues;* 4th—*lesser geas, scrying;* 5th—*teleport, magic jar*

Spell Eater (Su) If a warsoul succeeds on her save against a spell, she gains 5 temporary hit points and a +2 bonus on attack rolls. The attack bonus lasts for 1 round. The temporary hit points last for 1 minute.
Soul Tyrant (Su) As a swift action, a warsoul can draw arcane power from a willing hobgoblin within 30 feet who has 10 or fewer hit points. That hobgoblin is immediately slain, leaving behind a desiccated corpse. The warsoul heals 1 hit point per Hit Die she has, and she receives a +2 bonus to the save DC of the next spell she casts. She also gains a +2 bonus on any attack roll required by the next spell she casts. If that spell deals damage, the warsoul receives a bonus on the damage roll equal to her Hit Dice.
Arcane Talent (Ex) A warsoul casts spells as a 9th-level wizard.
Cult of Power (Ex) A warsoul is accompanied by 2d4 1st-level hobgoblin warriors who have sworn their lives to her. These thralls willingly sacrifice themselves for their master's soul tyrant ability.

Occasionally, a warcaster displays an incredible talent for spellcasting, quickly racing ahead of her peers and mastering potent spells. As she endures more rituals and delves deeper into her studies, the warcaster grows in power until her flesh becomes little more than a withered vessel for her soul. She even learns to consume the essence of her "lessers" to augment her spells. Invariably, she comes to either lead a tribe or die at the hands of a rival.

Strategies and Tactics

Warsouls never enter battle without several utterly loyal minions. Such hobgoblin warriors, compelled into obedience by the warsoul's great power and magnetic personality, believe that dying in their master's name is the surest way to attain an exalted state in the afterlife. They gladly perish to hold back an approaching enemy or to fuel the warsoul's soul tyrant ability.

Preferring to fight alongside duskblades, spellscourges, and a few allied warcasters, warsouls take care to cast defensive spells before a struggle begins. Only a truly cunning opponent can catch warsouls without their *mage armor, false life,* and *shield* spells cast. They use *haste* to augment their minions right before engaging.

A typical warsoul might use the following sequence of actions.

Round 1: Cast *web* to slow down or immobilize enemy fighters. Warsouls prefer for their warriors to bring the battle to the enemy.

Round 2: Cast *fireball* targeting the area of the *web*, so as to free up the battlefield while adding damage to the normal effect of the *fireball*.

Round 3: Order an attack on the toughest enemy, delay to maximize the save penalty that target takes from allies' Battle Magic Tactics, and cast *hold monster* on that foe.

Round 4: Cast *scorching ray* to finish off the held target.

Round 5: Cast an area spell targeting the largest group of opponents.

If the fight goes against the warsoul, she uses *dimension door* to escape with her hide intact. If her side is losing but she can save some of her troops, she uses *wall of ice* to cover their retreat before casting *dimension door.*

Hobgoblin Warsouls with Class Levels

Hobgoblin warsouls are elite, and they advance as wizards. A hobgoblin warsoul's wizard levels stack with her Hit Dice to determine spells per day and spells contained in her spellbook. No class except wizard is considered associated for a hobgoblin warsoul.

Level Adjustment: +4.

SAMPLE ENCOUNTERS

Hobgoblins rely on tightly coordinated, highly organized tactics. They travel in structured groups made up of members whose abilities work together to create a stronger whole.

Magic Marauders (EL 6): Two hobgoblin duskblades and a warcaster form the smallest combat formation in specialized hobgoblin units. The duskblades act as bodyguards until they wade into melee to weaken foes with their Battle Magic Tactics feat.

Warsoul Retinue (EL 9): A warsoul usually fights alongside two duskblades, a warcaster, and a spellscourge. In combat, this unit seeks out and slays enemy spellcasters. The duskblades form a defensive wall for the warcaster and the warsoul, while the spellscourge races forward to harass or kill enemy casters. The warcaster focuses his spells on enemy warriors, and the warsoul does the same with her damaging spells. She uses her incapacitating spells, such as *hold monster,* on any spellcaster unfortunate enough to draw the spellscourge's attention.

ECOLOGY

Hobgoblins are born predators. Unlike orcs and other savage humanoids, hobgoblins are naturally clever and adaptable, agile and hardy. Hobgoblins easily overcome competing creatures when the two groups' numbers are equal or favor hobgoblins.

Although few hobgoblin societies are agricultural, hobgoblins acquire food with little trouble through hunting, raiding, and conquest, as well as by maintaining small herds of livestock. They favor meat, and they can and do eat whatever they can kill, sometimes including other sentient creatures.

Hobgoblins reproduce in the same manner as humans, though breeding is strictly controlled in the majority of tribes (see Society). Young hobgoblins are born nearly helpless, but they mature more quickly than their human counterparts do.

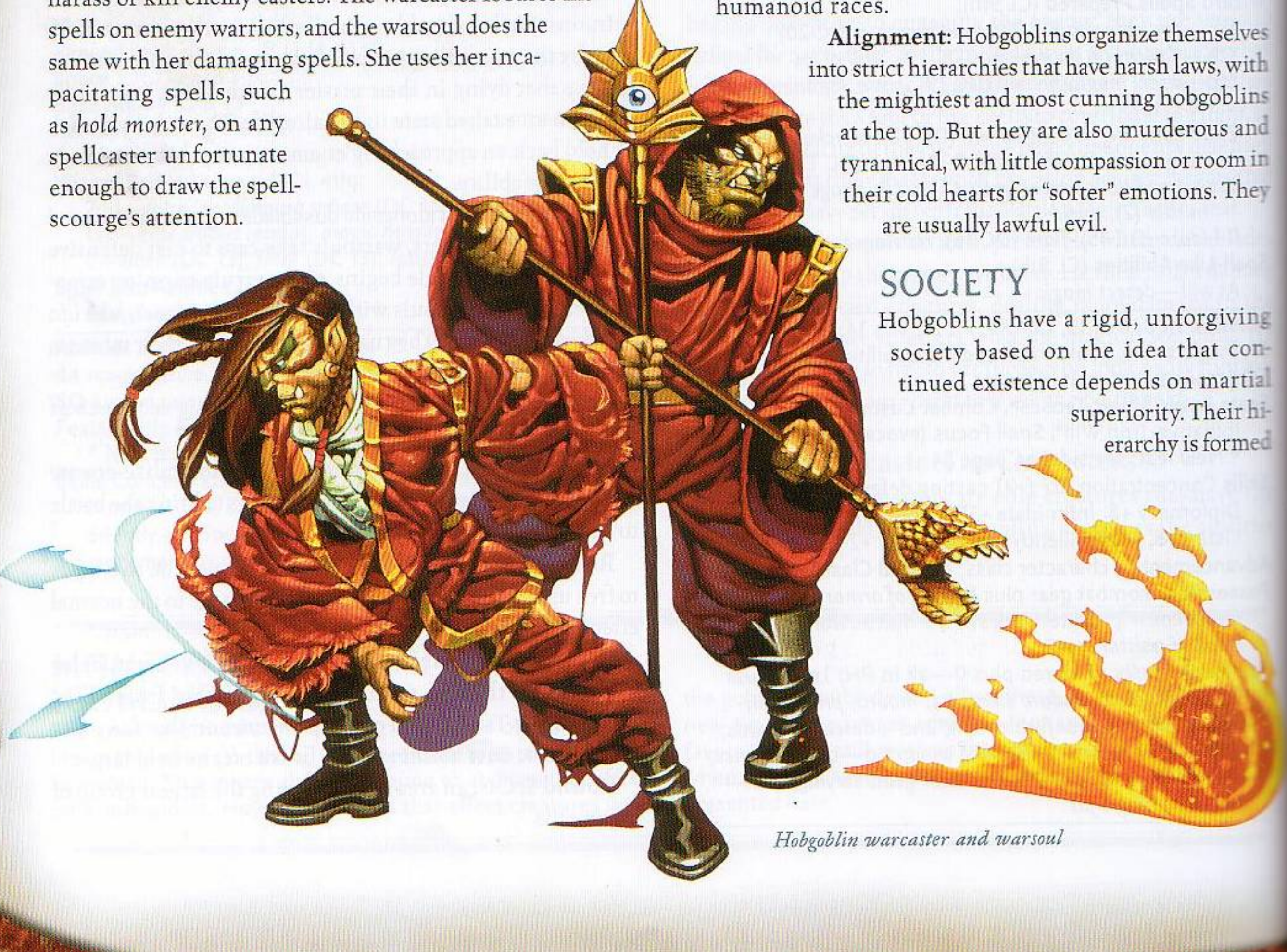
Environment: Hobgoblins prefer warm, hilly regions, but they are second only to humans in terms of adaptability. They can survive in almost any climate or terrain.

Typical Physical Characteristics: Hobgoblins are lean and tall—usually over 6-1/2 feet tall and 250 pounds and built for agility. They have orange skin that blues or reddens near their flat noses. Coarse hair, ranging in color from red-brown to gray, grows on their heads as well as on their arms and legs. Male hobgoblins can grow beards, and some even have pattern balding like males of other humanoid races.

Alignment: Hobgoblins organize themselves into strict hierarchies that have harsh laws, with the mightiest and most cunning hobgoblins at the top. But they are also murderous and tyrannical, with little compassion or room in their cold hearts for "softer" emotions. They are usually lawful evil.

SOCIETY

Hobgoblins have a rigid, unforgiving society based on the idea that continued existence depends on martial superiority. Their hierarchy is formed



Hobgoblin warcaster and warsoul

Illus. by T. Giorello

to place each hobgoblin within his or her appropriate social position while supporting nearly endless war. They have an insatiable thirst for conquest and dominance over all other creatures.

These goblinoids have two basic modes. They either seek to conquer their neighbors, or they gather their strength for the next attack while making raids and feints against their enemies. A hobgoblin tribe at peace is a tribe that is merely between wars.

Unlike orcs and other dim-witted evil humanoids, hobgoblins take a long-term, strategic view of their conflicts. A hobgoblin king might even strike an alliance or a nonaggression pact with a nonhobgoblin realm that has a tolerable ethos. Although hobgoblins thirst for conquest and the imposition of their tyranny over all other intelligent creatures, they recognize that their plans might require years of continual fighting.

To this end, hobgoblins organize into rigid castes, with each caste charged with a specific task. Slaves occupy the lowest rung in hobgoblin society, followed by nonwarrior craftsmen, religious leaders, and then warriors. Hobgoblins are assigned to a caste based on ability and tribal needs, with no regard for gender or personal preference.

Given this warrior ideal, success in combat is the best way to advance to the top of the social order. Thus, even a hobgoblin blacksmith or cleric takes up arms to earn respect from his fellows. Braver hobgoblin warriors submit themselves for brutal training and crueler rituals to toughen them for battle. Countless hobgoblins fail to survive the process.

With regard to hobgoblin culture, the term "warrior" should not be confused with "nonspellcaster." Spellcasters can be honored members of the hobgoblin hierarchy, and as with other members of the society, those spellcasters who succeed in battle are the most revered. In fact, hobgoblin wizards readily subject themselves to gruseome ordeals to steel themselves for war.

HOBGOBLIN LORE

Characters who have ranks in Knowledge (local) can learn more about hobgoblins. When a character makes a successful skill check, the following lore is revealed, including the information from lower DCs.

Knowledge (Local)

DC	Result
11	Hobgoblins are goblinoid creatures that are stronger and better organized than their smaller cousins.
16	Hobgoblins use coordinated tactics to defeat their enemies. They flank opponents, swarm around foes, and work as a team.
21	Hobgoblins are clever, and they use magic to twist themselves into better and more specialized soldiers and spellcasters. Some have even become monstrous humanoids.

The warrior ideal doesn't mean that other castes are looked down upon. All hobgoblin warriors recognize the need for craftspersons, healers, and similar members of a tribe. Only a fool would believe that the hobgoblin war machine could function without such pieces. However, no member of a lower caste dares defy or insult a warrior unless the lower-caste hobgoblin wants to die.

Religious leaders are the exception to this rule—lower than warriors but able to advise and even challenge their superiors. Most hobgoblin priests are adepts, and these priests oversee aspects of hobgoblin life such as arranged marriage and nonmilitary instruction, including the Common language. Hobgoblin children form few attachments; their primary bond is usually with an adept or cleric who instruct them. Hobgoblin despots have one or more religious advisors who have great influence in the tribe and over their leader.

Individual hobgoblins are taught from birth to protect themselves and their personal space. By extension, the personal space of the tribe is a communal responsibility, made up of the space occupied by each member of the tribe. An individual hobgoblin pays attention to his surroundings and is always alert for opportunities or threats. The tribe works to control its environment, dominating weaker sentient creatures and lashing out at perceived dangers. No room is left for emotional considerations—compassion is a weakness, and personal freedom a potential hazard to the tribe's overall safety.

In this vein, while two hobgoblins might risk a tryst for the sake of lust, hobgoblins don't marry for love. The priests select those who should breed to produce the strongest offspring, and marriages are arranged along those lines. Other marriages are forged to ensure alliances, shore up a position of power, or to take power away from another hobgoblin. Offspring are the property of their parents, instructed in the harsh hobgoblin way of life by father, mother, and the tribe's priests.

Similarly, adult hobgoblins are the property of their superiors, and the only way to avoid the order of a superior is to die through ritual suicide or to destroy that superior and his or her allies. Such events are rare, however, and most hobgoblins serve their tribe faithfully until they no longer can. Aged and feeble hobgoblins commit ritual suicide in a ceremony designed to honor their deity Maglubiyet and the tribe.

TYPICAL TREASURE

Hobgoblins value usable treasure, such as equipment and magic items, but they also collect jewelry and money. They have standard treasure for their Challenge Rating. Elite hobgoblins usually have equipment usual for NPCs of their Challenge Rating rather than standard treasure.

ILLURIEN

A dancing array of droplets swirls before you. In the midst of this storm stands a slender but extremely tall female clad in gray robes. She has no facial features other than her vivid blue eyes. With a graceful motion, she beckons to you.

ILLURIEN **CR 15**
NE Large outsider (evil, extraplanar)
Init +11; **Senses** low-light vision, darkvision 120 ft., blindsight 60 ft.; Listen +32, Spot +32
Aura storm of visions (30 ft.)
Languages understands all languages; cannot speak; telepathy 120 ft.

AC 24, touch 16, flat-footed 24; uncanny dodge (–1 size, +7 Dex, +8 natural)
Miss Chance 20% (cloud of foresight)
hp 230 (20 HD); fast healing 5; **DR** 15/good; rejuvenation
Immune disease, electricity, paralysis, poison, polymorph, *sleep*, stunning
Resist acid 20; **SR** 24
Fort +21, **Ref** +21, **Will** +21

Speed 40 ft. (8 squares); fly 80 ft. (perfect)
Melee tempest lash +28/+23/+18/+13 (1d8+6 plus tempest lash)
Space 10 ft.; **Reach** 10 ft.
Base Atk +20; **Grp** +30
Atk Options aligned strike (evil), magic strike
Special Actions cloud of foresight
Spell-Like Abilities (CL 20th):
At will—*analyze dweomer, arcane sight*
1/day—*plane shift*

Abilities Str 22, Dex 24, Con 25, Int 36, Wis 24, Cha 21
SA aligned strike, tempest lash, magic strike, spell-like abilities, storm of visions
SQ pointed knowledge
Feats Alertness, Great Fortitude, Improved Initiative, Iron Will, Lightning Reflexes, Weapon Finesse, Weapon Focus (tempest lash)
Skills Bluff +28, Appraise +36, Decipher Script +36, Diplomacy +11, Gather Information +30, Intimidate +30, Knowledge (arcana) +36, Knowledge (architecture and engineering) +36, Knowledge (dungeoneering) +36, Knowledge (geography) +36, Knowledge (history) +36, Knowledge (local) +36, Knowledge (nature) +36, Knowledge (nobility and royalty) +36, Knowledge (the planes) +36, Knowledge (religion) +36, Listen +32, Search +36 (+38 secret doors), Sense Motive +30, Spellcraft +38 (+40 deciphering scrolls), Spot +32, Survival +7 (+9 in aboveground natural environments, +9 on other planes, +9 to avoid getting lost, +9 to follow tracks, +9 underground), Use Magic Device +28 (+30 scrolls)

Storm of Visions (Su) The watery drops that surround Illurien are the collected fragments of the knowledge she has accumulated. At the end of each of Illurien's turns, creatures within 30 feet of her must succeed on a DC 25 Will save or be dazed for 1 round, as visions of exotic truths captivate their minds. A successful save negates the effect, but each creature in the area must make a new saving throw at the end of each of Illurien's turns. The save DC is Charisma-based. This is a mind-affecting ability.

Cloud of Foresight (Su) Drawing on her boundless lore, Illurien uses opponents' tendencies and desires against them. This causes her opponents to have a 20% miss chance. Once per round, as an immediate action, Illurien can impose a –8 penalty on a single attack roll, check, or saving throw made by an opponent within 60 feet.

Rejuvenation (Su) If slain, Illurien reappears in the Athenaeum Nefarious (see below) two days later.

Tempest Lash (Su) Illurien attacks by lashing her foes with a knifelike weapon formed from the droplets that surround her. Anyone struck by this tempest lash must succeed on a DC 25 Will save or take 1d4 points of Intelligence damage. Illurien heals 5 hit points for each point of Intelligence damage she deals with this attack.

Pointed Knowledge (Su) Illurien understands all languages, and she instantly knows facts about creatures she speaks to telepathically, such as their age, where they were born, and the important events of their lives.

A strange creature composed of countless tears and raindrops, Illurien of the Myriad Glimpses is a collector of information and a keeper of secrets. She is fascinated by the contents of other minds, believing it is her right to obtain and preserve such knowledge for herself.

STRATEGIES AND TACTICS

Illurien engages those she meets in polite telepathic conversation, but this behavior is just an excuse to examine their minds. Once Illurien has selected the brightest intellect among her chosen targets, she moves in, subjecting her foes to her storm of visions. She uses her tempest lash to deal Intelligence damage to her preferred enemy,

ILLURIEN LORE

Characters who have ranks in Knowledge (the planes) can learn more about Illurien. When a character makes a successful skill check, the following lore is revealed, including the information from lower DCs.

Knowledge (the Planes)

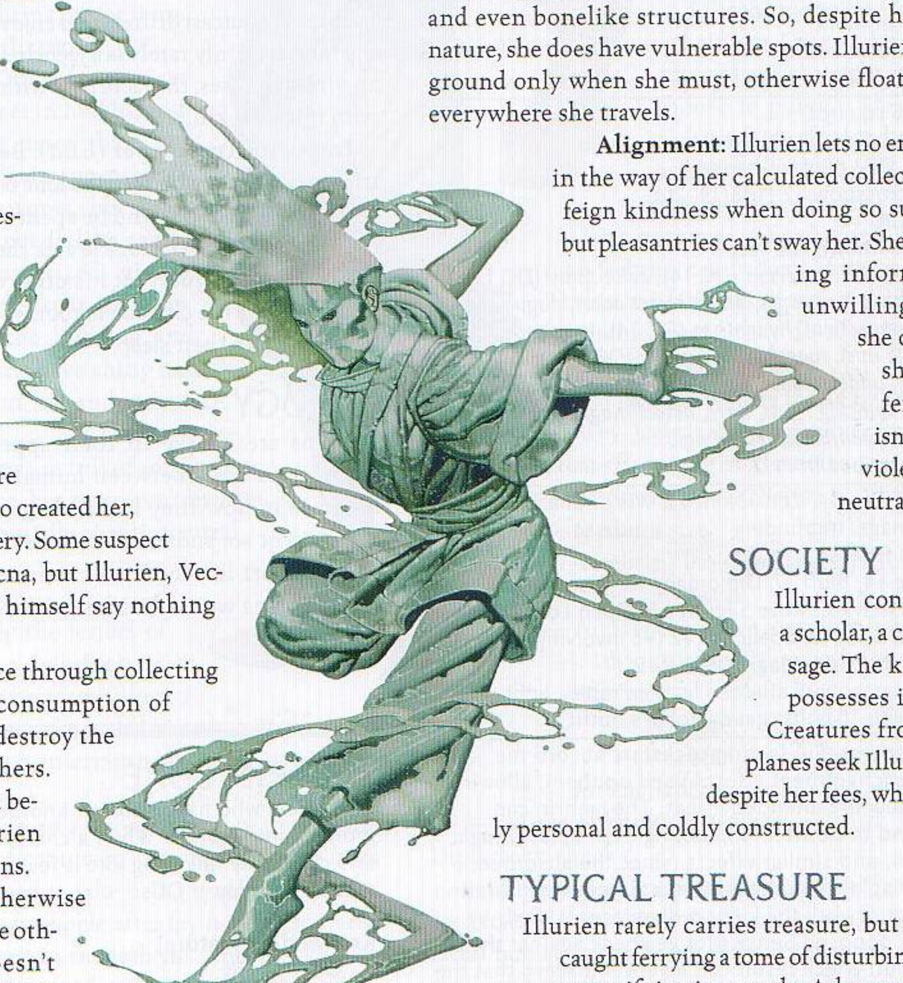
DC	Result
25	This is Illurien of the Myriad Glimpses, a strange creature that steals knowledge from the minds of her victims. She is amoral and unworthy of trust. Her home is the Concordant Domain of the Outlands.
30	The cloud that surrounds Illurien can rob mortals of their senses. Her attacks drain her target's mind while healing Illurien's wounds. It is said that she resides in a secret library in the Outlands known as the Athenaeum Nefarious.
35	Illurien's knowledge protects her in combat, and she is immune to disease, electricity, paralysis, poison, polymorph, *sleep*, and stunning. She is resistant to acid and magic and capable of spontaneously traveling between the planes. She can be called to a place in the Outlands referred to as the Shrouded Dispensary, where she can be coaxed into sharing her knowledge.
40	If killed, Illurien merely rejuvenates, reappearing inside the Athenaeum Nefarious within two days.

relying on her cloud of foresight to foil that opponent's defenders. During combat, she sometimes uses her pointed knowledge to intimidate and threaten her opponents. If pressed, she uses *plane shift* to flee to the Athenaeum Nefarious (see Environment).

SAMPLE ENCOUNTER

Illurien travels the planes in search of knowledge and mysteries to steal and keep for herself.

Mindful Murder (EL 15): Illurien has come to steal information from one of the PCs' sagacious allies. She talked with that NPC for a while, then attacked him, drained him of intelligence, and slew him. After the murder, Illurien methodically inspected the slain man's organs and body parts to see his specific internal workings. The characters now have a grisly murder to solve, and the corpse, drained of much of its knowledge, utters only the name "Illurien" if questioned with a *speak with dead* spell.



Illurien of the Myriad Glimpses

ECOLOGY

Illurien is a unique native of the Concordant Domain of the Outlands. Where she came from and who created her, if anyone did, is a mystery. Some suspect she is a minion of Vecna, but Illurien, Vecna's clergy, and Vecna himself say nothing on this subject.

She gains sustenance through collecting knowledge, but her consumption of other minds doesn't destroy the information she gathers. Rather, that cognition becomes a part of Illurien and her storm of visions.

Illurien doesn't otherwise eat or drink, and unlike other outsiders, she doesn't breathe. She has no physical needs or desires beyond her thirst for erudition.

Environment: Illurien resides in an extraplanar repository referred to as the Athenaeum Nefarious, a place so well hidden in the wilderness of the Outlands that few have found it—and fewer still return from it. The library contains stacks of dark and forgotten lore, baleful traps, vile guardians, and several one-way portals to other planes. A clue to the whereabouts of this sinister vault is the perpetual storm that enshrouds it. Only Illurien can use *plane shift* to arrive precisely within the Athenaeum Nefarious.

The Shrouded Dispensary, a building 100 miles from the center spire of the Outlands, is where those who wish to speak with Illurien can call her. She comes if she's willing, carrying a *sword of the planes* (*DMG* 228) and protected by the effect the Outlands has on magic, spell-like abilities, and supernatural abilities. Only Illurien can use the Dispensary's planar gate, which leads to the Athenaeum Nefarious.

Physical Characteristics: Illurien is a graceful, humanlike, female figure, roughly 8 feet tall, with shimmering silver-gray skin. She has no distinct facial features other than a pair of silver-tinted eyes with blue irises. Close examination shows that she is composed entirely of iridescent droplets, but this watery composition forms organs and even bonelike structures. So, despite her elemental nature, she does have vulnerable spots. Illurien touches the ground only when she must, otherwise floating or flying everywhere she travels.

Alignment: Illurien lets no emotions stand in the way of her calculated collecting. She can feign kindness when doing so suits her ends, but pleasantries can't sway her. She enjoys plucking information from unwilling minds, and she doesn't care if she causes suffering, but she isn't gratuitously violent. Illurien is neutral evil.

SOCIETY

Illurien considers herself a scholar, a collector, and a sage. The knowledge she possesses is in demand. Creatures from across the planes seek Illurien's counsel, despite her fees, which are brutally personal and coldly constructed.

TYPICAL TREASURE

Illurien rarely carries treasure, but she might be caught ferrying a tome of disturbing teachings or a mystifying item to the Athenaeum Nefarious. If she is carrying valuables, those objects are worth as much as standard treasure for Illurien's Challenge Rating (22,000 gp). The sword she carries to the Shrouded Dispensary is worth slightly more than this total.

If it occurs anywhere other than the Shrouded Dispensary, Illurien's death spawns hints to the location of the Athenaeum Nefarious in minds recently touched by the tempest lash. Creatures that survive her attacks might be left with the ability to find Illurien's gloomy home.

Illus. by T. Giorello

JAEBRIN

Nimble and attractive, this short humanoid wears stylish silks and fine jewelry. A veil shrouds the lower half of his face, leaving his striking brown eyes uncovered. A sudden breeze blows the veil aside—revealing that his oversized mouth is full of needlelike teeth.

JAEBRIN TRICKSTER **CR 1**
Male jaebrin beguiler* 1
 * Class described in *PH2*
CN Medium fey
Init +2; **Senses** low-light vision; Listen +3, Spot +3
Languages Common, Elven, Halfling, Sylvan

AC 16, touch 13, flat-footed 14
 (+2 Dex, +3 armor, +1 luck)
hp 7 (1 HD)
Immune enchantment
Resist feign enchantment
Fort +1, **Ref** +2, **Will** +1

Speed 30 ft. (6 squares)
Melee rapier +2 (1d6/18–20) or
Melee bite +2 (1d3 plus will sapper)
Ranged light crossbow +2 (1d8/19–20)
Base Atk +0; **Grp** +0
Beguiler Spells Known (CL 1st):
 1st (4/day)—*charm person* (DC 14), *color spray* (DC 13), *comprehend languages, detect secret doors, disguise self, expeditious retreat, hypnotism* (DC 14), *mage armor, obscuring mist, rouse**, *silent image* (DC 13), *sleep* (DC 14), *undetectable alignment, whelm** (DC 14)
 0 (5/day)—*dancing lights, daze, detect magic, ghost sound, message, open/close, read magic*
 * Spells described in *PH2*

Abilities Str 10, Dex 14, Con 13, Int 15, Wis 8, Cha 12
SQ armored mage, trapfinding
Feats Weapon Finesse
Skills Appraise +4, Bluff +7, Diplomacy +3, Disguise +5, Hide +6, Listen +3, Move Silently +6, Open Lock +6, Perform +3, Spot +3, Spellcraft +2 (+6 involving enchantments), Use Magic Device +5
Possessions masterwork studded leather, rapier, light crossbow with 10 bolts, gaudy noble's outfit

Feign Enchantment (Su) Jaebrin tricksters absorb the energy of enchantment effects used on them, allowing them to know the intended effect. The jaebrin can then pretend to be affected, fooling even *detect magic, arcane sight,* and similar effects, since the absorbed energy is displayed in the jaebrin's aura for the duration of the effect or until the jaebrin dismisses it. Only by winning an opposed Sense Motive check against the jaebrin's Bluff check result can a viewer discern that the fey is not enchanted.

Will Sapper (Ex) Any creature damaged by a jaebrin trickster's bite must succeed on a DC 11 Will save or take a –4 penalty on Will saves for 1 minute. The effect of multiple bites doesn't stack. The save DC is Constitution-based.

Armored Mage (Ex) A jaebrin trickster does not have an arcane spell failure chance when wearing light armor.

Jaebrins are fey whose fearsome teeth belie an impish nature. Their powers of enchantment, and their immunity to those same effects, make them tricky opponents and untrustworthy allies.

STRATEGIES AND TACTICS

Jaebrin tricksters live by their wits, not by their mettle, and they prefer to befuddle and enchant opponents rather than face them in open combat. No jaebrin trickster is above using *charm person* and *hypnotism* to get his way. If forced to fight, a jaebrin trickster uses *sleep*, then casts *obscuring mist.* He then casts *expeditious retreat* and beats feet out of the area.

SAMPLE ENCOUNTER

Jaebrins are outcast drifters that enjoy tricking and entertaining mortals. Only rarely is a jaebrin found among other fey, and in such cases, the jaebrin is with a mate or has fallen in with immoral kin.

Impostor Innkeeper (EL 1): Bertletuckle is a jaebrin trickster. He overwhelmed the lone barkeep of a roadside inn earlier this morning, and he spent the day feasting. When the PCs arrive, Bertletuckle acts the part of an innkeeper pleased to have guests at his otherwise deserted inn. He happily offers the characters rooms for the night, then tries to rob them in their sleep.

ECOLOGY

Jaebrins are elflike in their appearance, but they are more like a cross between humans and half-elves when it comes to how they live and age. A jaebrin is an adult at age 20 or so, and can live to be nearly 200. This seems to be a short life for a fey creature, and some speculate that jaebrins would live longer if they remained among their fey kin.

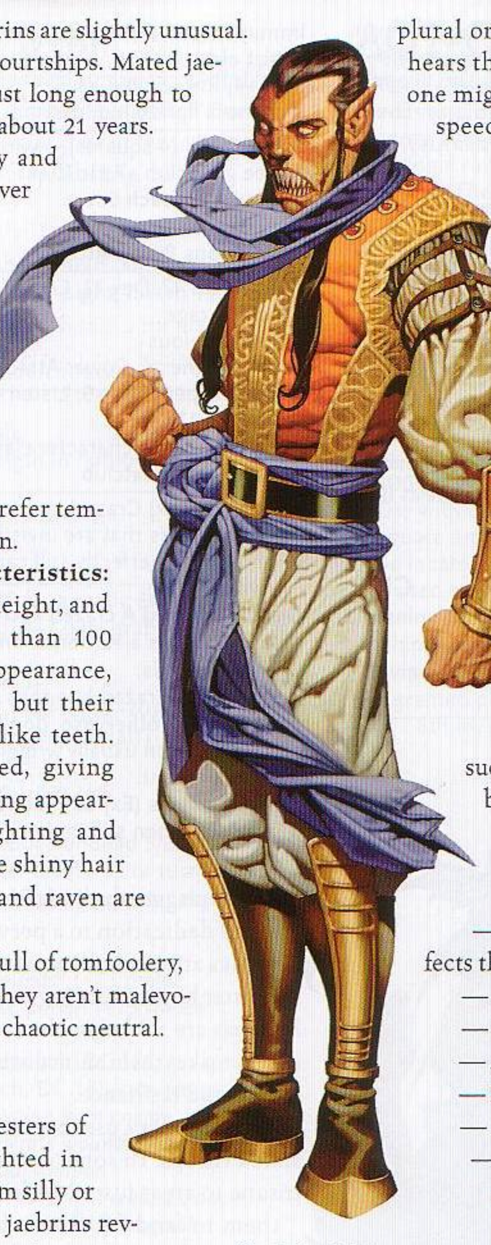
JAEBRIN LORE

Characters who have ranks in Knowledge (nature) can learn more about jaebrins. When a character makes a successful skill check, the following lore is revealed, including the information from lower DCs.

Knowledge (Nature)

DC	Result
11	This creature is a jaebrin, a fey creature full of mischief. This result reveals all fey traits.
16	Jaebrins have needle-toothed mouths capable of delivering a painful bite. That same bite saps the will.
21	Jaebrins excel at enchantment magic and are immune to its effects. They have the uncanny ability to fake being enchanted, however.

When it comes to love, jaebrins are slightly unusual. Females commonly initiate courtships. Mated jaebrins usually stay together just long enough to raise their first offspring, or about 21 years. Then the two split amicably and remain friends, but they are never again lovers.


Jaebrin trickster

Jaebrins love lavish feasts. Born with hedonistic appetites, they can eat and drink nearly continuously without gaining weight. They indulge this gluttony whenever they can.

Environment: Jaebrins prefer temperate climes near civilization.

Typical Physical Characteristics: Jaebrins rarely top 5 feet in height, and individuals weighing more than 100 pounds are rare. Elflike in appearance, jaebrins have fine features, but their mouths bristle with needlelike teeth. Their fair eyes are oversized, giving them an alluring or unsettling appearance, depending on the lighting and their mood. All jaebrins have shiny hair of nearly any color, but red and raven are most common.

Alignment: Jaebrins are full of tomfoolery, egotism, and decadence, but they aren't malevolent or cruel. They are usually chaotic neutral.

SOCIETY

Jaebrins were formerly the jesters of fey courts. Fey nobles delighted in enchanting jaebrins to perform silly or weird acts. For their part, the jaebrins reveled in their role, seeing entertainment as a great service.

Eventually they built up a strong tolerance to enchantment. For a number of centuries, they hid this fact from their masters and learned to fake being under the sway of enchantment. In time, fey noble after fey noble discovered the ruse and lost interest in the jaebrins. The forsaken fey were shamed into self- imposed exile.

Some jaebrins now make their way as merchants, charlatans, and swindlers. Others bring merriment as bards, and a few exploit their talents by becoming sorcerers. Such jaebrins might even seek the excitement of adventuring.

A large number of jaebrins speak with pronounced lisps and have a comical tendency to pronounce all nouns as plural. They even "pluralize" words that are already plural or add an "s" to words that don't need one. "I hears the femaleses in this town are all beautieses," one might say, enjoying the laughter his ridiculous speech evokes.

TYPICAL TREASURE

Jaebrins love fine clothing, jewelry, and gems. Although they carry money, they love to hoodwink others out of necessities such as provisions. Jaebrins have standard treasure for their Challenge Rating.

JAEBRINS AS CHARACTERS

Like humanoids, jaebrins gain their Hit Dice and much of their power from the class or classes they choose to pursue. These fey prefer trickery to combat, and they're bright enough to accentuate their strengths, so they pursue careers as bards, beguilers, or rogues. A few become sorcerers, and such jaebrins can become fearsome indeed. Jaebrins are faithless, however—if they pursue divine magic, they do so only through the druid class.

Jaebrins possess the following racial traits.

— Fey. Jaebrins are not subject to spells or effects that affect only humanoids.

— −2 Strength, +2 Charisma.

— Medium size.

— A jaebrin's base land speed is 30 feet.

— Low-light vision.

— All jaebrins have a +1 luck bonus to AC.

— Immunity to enchantment spells and effects.

— Natural Attack: Bite (1d3).

— +1 racial bonus on saving throw DCs for enchantment spells the jaebrin casts.

— +2 racial bonus on Appraise, Bluff, Perform, and Diplomacy checks.

— Jaebrins treat Spellcraft as a class skill and are considered trained in it even if they have no ranks. They have a +4 racial bonus on Spellcraft checks involving enchantment spells and effects.

— Automatic Languages: Common, Sylvan. Bonus Languages: Draconic, Elven, Goblin, Gnome, Halfling.

— Special Attack (see above): Will sapper. A jaebrin adds 1/2 his class level to the saving throw DC of this ability.

— Special Qualities (see above): Feign enchantment.

— Favored Class: Beguiler (*PH2* 6).

— Level Adjustment: +1.

Illus. by T. Giorello

KUO-TOA

Kuo-toas are fishlike humanoids that dwell in the deepest oceans and subterranean seas. Alien and sinister, these creatures harbor dark secrets, simmering insanity, and unreasoning xenophobia.

This section presents five kuo-toas that serve as examples of this bizarre culture. It also expands on kuo-toa society, providing glimpses of the madness that boils within the twisted social order of these monstrous creatures.

Kuo-toas are described beginning on page 163 of the *Monster Manual*.

CRAZED KUO-TOA

This fishlike humanoid's eyes bulge out, and it shrieks as it charges you. It swings a massive stone club as if the weapon were as light as a toothpick.

Crazed Kuo-Toa **CR 3**

Often CE Medium monstrous humanoid (aquatic)
Init +1; **Senses** darkvision 60 ft., keen sight; Listen +4, Spot +9
Languages Kuo-Toan

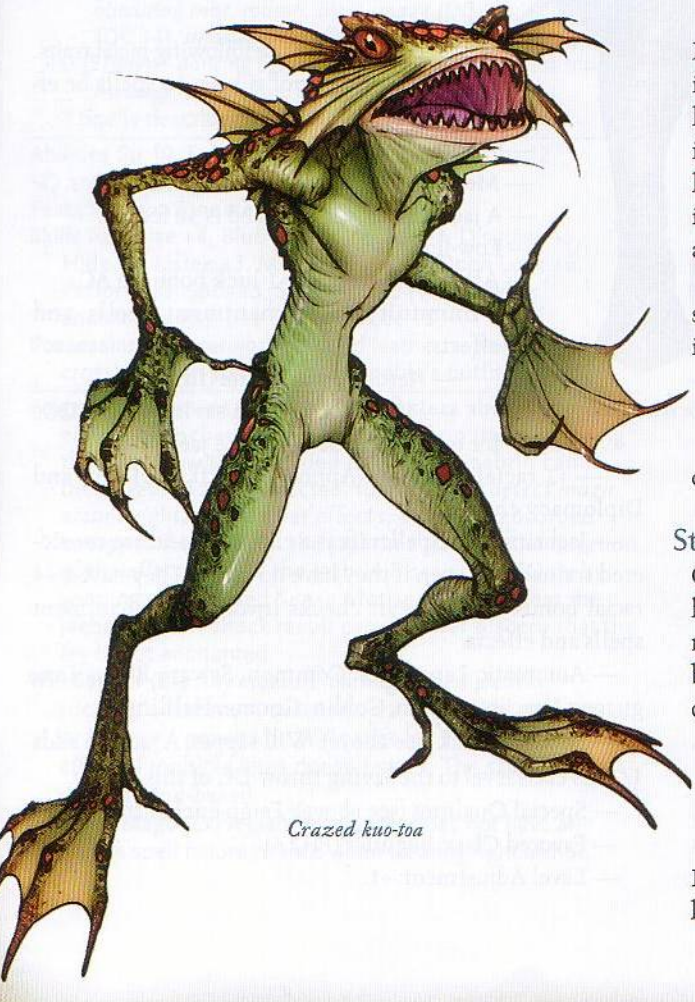
AC 17, touch 11, flat-footed 16 (+1 Dex, +6 natural)
hp 33 (4 HD); death rage
Immune mind-affecting spells and abilities, paralysis, poison
Resist electricity 10, slippery
Fort +4, **Ref** +5, **Will** +3
Weakness light blindness

Speed 20 ft. (4 squares), swim 50 ft.
Melee greatclub +7 (1d10+4)
Space 5 ft.; **Reach** 5 ft.
Base Atk +4; **Grp** +7
Atk Options Power Attack

Abilities Str 17, Dex 12, Con 17, Int 9, Wis 8, Cha 8
SA death rage
SQ amphibious
Feats Alertness^{B}, Power Attack, Toughness
Skills Escape Artist +9, Listen +4, Search +3, Spot +9, Swim +11
Advancement by character class; **Favored Class** barbarian
Possessions greatclub

Keen Sight (Ex) Crazed kuo-toas can spot moving objects or creatures that are invisible or ethereal. Only by remaining perfectly still can such objects or creatures avoid notice.
Death Rage (Ex) A crazed kuo-toa that has 10 or fewer hit points gains a +2 bonus on melee attack rolls and melee damage rolls.
Slippery (Ex) Crazed kuo-toas secrete an oily film. Webs, magical or otherwise, don't affect crazed kuo-toas, and they can usually wriggle free from most forms of confinement.
Light Blindness (Ex) Blinded for 1 round in *daylight,* then dazzled when still in *daylight.*

Illus. by J. Zhang


Crazed kuo-toa

Madness plagues the kuo-toas. Owing to centuries of inbreeding and dedication to a perverse deity, a large number of kuo-toas are mentally unstable. Some kuo-toas slide over into utter lunacy, turning into murderous creatures. Crazed kuo-toas are no larger than their fellows, but their mental illness makes them animalistic, giving them abnormal might, agility, and resilience.

Kuo-toa whips use their crazed underlings as disposable shock troops. In some cases, however, a leader exiles the insane to areas just outside the main settlement, leaving them to fend for themselves. The crazed kuo-toas are then no longer a strain on the community's resources, but they still act as that settlement's outermost ring of defense.

Strategies and Tactics

Crazed kuo-toas hurl themselves at their enemies, heedless of safety. They use Power Attack at its maximum, reducing their commitment to this tactic only when it becomes evident it's costing them the opportunity to draw blood.

Crazed Kuo-Toas with Class Levels

Crazed kuo-toas rarely survive long enough to advance in a class, but those that do advance as barbarians. Barbarian is considered an associated class for a crazed kuo-toa.

Level Adjustment: +3.

KUO-TOA EXALTED WHIP

A red flush suffuses this fishlike humanoid, and armor crafted from seashells covers its form. It bares its sharp teeth in hatred. One hand clutches an odd staff with a lobsterlike claw at the top; the other dances in the complicated gestures of spellcasting.

Kuo-Toa Exalted Whip CR 7

Always NE Medium monstrous humanoid (aquatic)
Init +5; **Senses** darkvision 60 ft., keen sight; Listen +15, Spot +19
Aura aquatic might (60 ft.)
Languages Aquan, Kuo-Toan, Undercommon

AC 25, touch 11, flat-footed 24 (+1 Dex, +5 armor, +9 natural)
hp 85 (10 HD); **DR** 5/good; strength in numbers
Immune paralysis, poison
Resist electricity 10, slippery
Fort +8, **Ref** +9, **Will** +13
Weakness light blindness

Speed 20 ft. (4 squares), swim 50 ft.; aquatic escape
Melee *+1 pincer staff* +17/+12 (1d10+7 plus grapple) or
Melee mwk dagger +16/+11 (1d4+5)
Ranged mwk light crossbow +14 (1d8+2/19–20)
Space 5 ft.; **Reach** 5 ft. (10 ft. with pincer staff)
Base Atk +10; **Grp** +13
Atk Options Power Attack, smite 1/day (+4 attack, +8 damage)
Special Actions lightning bolt, rebuke undead 5/day (+4, 2d6+10, 8th), rebuke water creatures or turn fire creatures 5/day (+4, 2d6+10, 8th), spontaneous casting (*inflict* spells)
Cleric Spells Prepared (CL 8th):
4th—*air walk, inflict critical wounds*D (+13 melee touch, DC 19), *divine power, poison* (+13 melee touch, DC 19)
3rd—*bestow curse* (+13 melee touch, DC 18), *contagion*D (+13 melee touch, DC 18), *cure serious wounds, dispel magic, protection from energy*
2nd—*bull's strength, cure moderate wounds, fog cloud*D, *hold person* (DC 17), *spiritual weapon*
1st—*bless, command* (DC 16), *cure light wounds, doom* (DC 16), *obscuring mist*D, *protection from good, sanctuary* (DC 16)
0—*create water* (2), *cure minor wounds* (2), *detect magic* (2)
D: Domain spell. Deity: Blibdoolpoolp. Domains: Destruction, Water.

Abilities Str 16, Dex 12, Con 18, Int 14, Wis 20, Cha 14
SA aura of aquatic might, lightning bolt, spells, rebuke undead, rebuke water creatures, smite, spontaneous casting, turn fire creatures
SQ amphibious, divine talent
Feats Alertness^B, Combat Casting, Improved Initiative, Power Attack, Weapon Focus (pincer staff)
Skills Concentration +14 (+17 casting defensively), Diplomacy +9, Escape Artist +9, Intimidate +10, Knowledge (religion) +10, Listen +15, Search +6, Sense Motive +10, Spot +19
Advancement by character class; **Favored Class** cleric
Possessions *+1 seashell armor* (chain shirt), *+1 pincer staff*, masterwork dagger, masterwork light crossbow with 20 bolts, *cloak of resistance +1, phylactery of faithfulness*

Keen Sight (Ex) As the crazed kuo-toa.

Aura of Aquatic Might (Su) All evil aquatic creatures within 60 feet of a kuo-toa exalted whip, including the creature itself (included in statistics), gain a +2 bonus on attack rolls and damage rolls. Any evil aquatic creature within range that is reduced to fewer than 0 hit points can make a single ranged attack or melee attack as an immediate action. The effects of multiple auras of aquatic might do not stack.

Strength in Numbers (Su) A kuo-toa exalted whip draws strength from fellow kuo-toas. At the start of each of its turns, an exalted whip heals a number of hit points equal to the number of kuo-toas within 15 feet of itself.

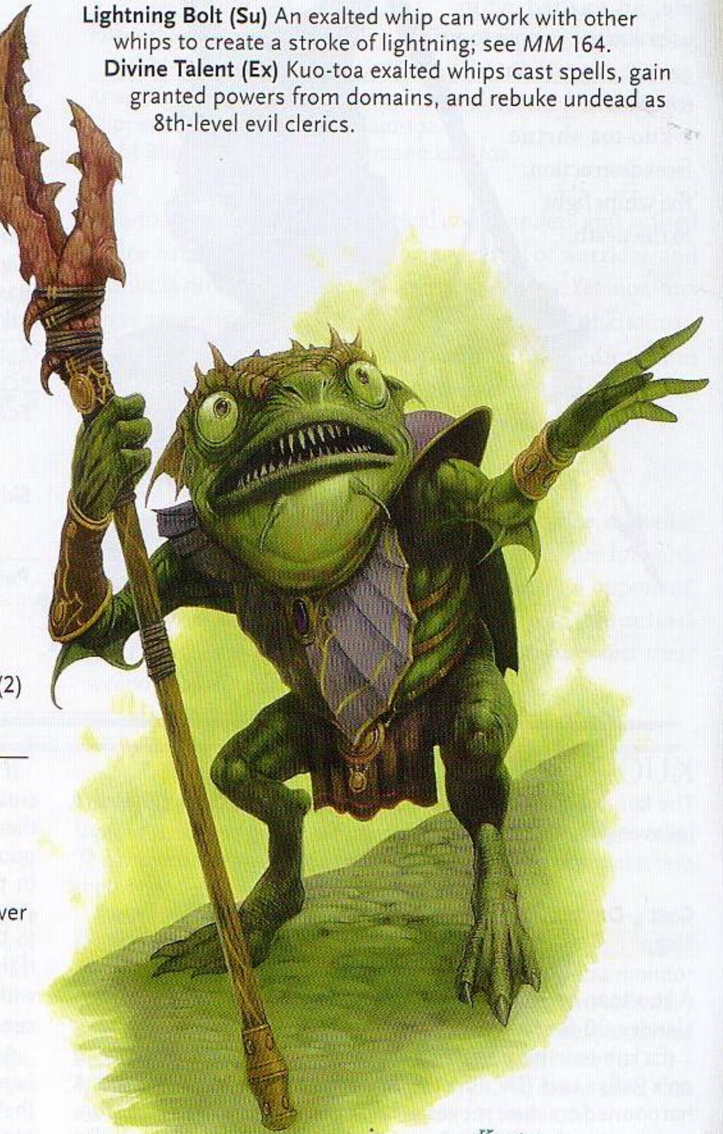
Slippery (Ex) As the crazed kuo-toa.

Light Blindness (Ex) As the crazed kuo-toa.

Aquatic Escape (Su) Once per day, as a swift action, a kuo-toa exalted whip can touch a body of water to travel up to 1 mile to another body of water, transporting up to 100 pounds of other creatures and equipment per Hit Die with itself. Each body of water must fill a 5-foot square and be at least 3 feet deep. The destination must be located in a place the exalted whip has physically visited before.

Lightning Bolt (Su) An exalted whip can work with other whips to create a stroke of lightning; see *MM* 164.

Divine Talent (Ex) Kuo-toa exalted whips cast spells, gain granted powers from domains, and rebuke undead as 8th-level evil clerics.



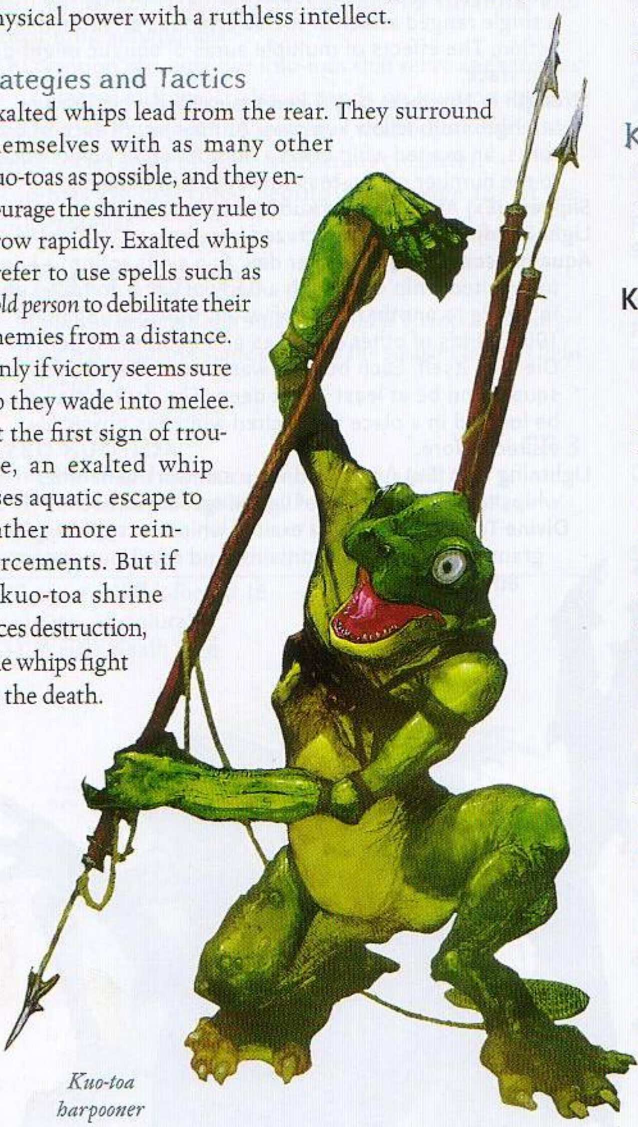
Kuo-toa exalted whip

Illus. by W. England

Exalted whips are kuo-toas marked for greatness by Blibdoolpoolp. When that goddess is willing, a single kuo-toan egg in a large settlement hatches an exalted whip. Exalted whips quickly ascend the kuo-toan hierarchy, combining physical power with a ruthless intellect.

Strategies and Tactics

Exalted whips lead from the rear. They surround themselves with as many other kuo-toas as possible, and they encourage the shrines they rule to grow rapidly. Exalted whips prefer to use spells such as *hold person* to debilitate their enemies from a distance. Only if victory seems sure do they wade into melee. At the first sign of trouble, an exalted whip uses aquatic escape to gather more reinforcements. But if a kuo-toa shrine faces destruction, the whips fight to the death.



Kuo-toa harpooner

Illus. by A. Waters

Exalted Whips with Class Levels

Kuo-toa exalted whips are elite, and they advance as clerics, but they don't gain extra domains from doing so. A kuo-toa exalted whip's cleric levels stack with Hit Dice to determine spells per day and the ability to rebuke undead. No class except for cleric is considered associated for a kuo-toa exalted whip.

Level Adjustment: +4.

KUO-TOA HARPOONER

This fishlike humanoid has large, staring eyes. The lower jaw of its wide mouth droops downward as it raises a barbed spear with its spindly arms.

KUO-TOA HARPOONER **CR 4**

Male kuo-toa fighter 2
NE Medium monstrous humanoid (aquatic)
Init +3; **Senses** darkvision 60 ft., keen sight; Listen +9, Spot +13
Languages Aquan, Kuo-Toan, Undercommon

AC 26, touch 13, flat-footed 23; adhesive
(+3 Dex, +4 armor, +3 shield, +6 natural)
hp 32 (4 HD)
Immune paralysis, poison
Resist electricity 10, slippery
Fort +5, **Ref** +6, **Will** +5
Weakness light blindness

Speed 20 ft. (4 squares), swim 50 ft.
Melee mwk kuo-toan harpoon +9 (1d10+3)
Ranged mwk kuo-toan harpoon +9 (1d10+3) or
Ranged mwk light crossbow +8 (1d8/19–20)
Base Atk +4; **Grp** +7
Atk Options Point Blank Shot, Precise Shot

Abilities Str 16, Dex 16, Con 15, Int 14, Wis 14, Cha 6
SQ amphibious
Feats Alertness^{B}, Exotic Weapon Proficiency (kuo-toan harpoon)^{B}, Point Blank Shot, Precise Shot, Weapon Focus (kuo-toan harpoon)^{B}
Skills Appraise +5 (+7 related to Craft), Craft (any one) +9, Escape Artist +11, Listen +9, Move Silently +8, Search +6, Spot +13, Swim +11
Possessions *+1 studded leather, +1 heavy steel shield,* 3 masterwork kuo-toan harpoons, masterwork light crossbow with 20 bolts

KUO-TOAN HARPOON

The kuo-toan harpoon is an exotic melee weapon that has the following characteristics.

Cost	Dmg (S)	Dmg (M)	Critical	Range Incr.	Wt.	Type
15 gp	1d8	1d10	×2	30 ft.	6 lb.	Piercing

A kuo-toan harpoon is a spear that has a barbed metal head. A slender, 30-foot-long chain runs from the harpoon's end.

If a kuo-toan harpoon deals damage, the target must succeed on a Reflex save (DC 10 + the damage dealt) or be harpooned. A harpooned creature moves at half speed, cannot charge or run, and must make a DC 15 Concentration check to cast a spell. On a failed check, it loses the spell.

If a kuo-toa harpooner holds onto the chain, the harpooned creature must make an opposed Strength check to move more then 30 feet away from the harpooner. As a swift action, the harpooner can wrap his end of the chain around his sticky shield. In this case, he gains a +5 bonus on the opposed Strength check. As a standard action, the harpooner can slam his shield to the ground to seal it in place with the chain still attached. If the harpooner does so, the harpooned creature is lashed to within 30 feet of the spot the shield is stuck to and must succeed on a DC 20 Strength check to escape.

A harpooned creature can pull the harpoon out if it has two hands free and takes a full-round action to do so. Removing the harpoon in this way deals 1d10 points of damage to the harpooned creature. A successful DC 15 Heal check allows the removal of the harpoon without any additional damage.

Keen Sight (Ex) As the crazed kuo-toa.
Adhesive (Ex) Kuo-toas coat their shields with adhesive. Those who make unsuccessful melee attacks against a kuo-toa must succeed on a DC 14 Reflex save, or their weapon sticks to the kuo-toa's shield and is yanked out of their grasp. Creatures using natural weapons are automatically grappled if they get stuck. The adhesive remains good until it catches one creature or object, which uses it up. Pulling a stuck weapon or limb from a shield requires a DC 20 Strength check.
Slippery (Ex) As the crazed kuo-toa.
Light Blindness (Ex) As the crazed kuo-toa.

Kuo-toa harpooners are elite warriors that help monitors and whips keep their society functioning. Harpooners capture and confine kuo-toas that slide into madness and threaten the precarious stability of a kuo-toan settlement. When faced with invading humans and other threats, harpooners use their weapons to neutralize and kill attackers.

Strategies and Tactics

Kuo-toa harpooners keep to the edge of a battle, using their harpoons to capture and neutralize their opponents. The harpooners usually focus their fire on a single foe, hoping to control that enemy and hold it still while the rest of the kuo-toas swarm in to attack.

KUO-TOA MONITOR

This fishlike humanoid crouches low. Its wide fists are raised in front of it, and one foot slides forward. In an instant, it is in motion, speeding forward in long strides.

KUO-TOA MONITOR **CR 6**
Female kuo-toa monk 4
LE Medium monstrous humanoid (aquatic)
Init +2; **Senses** darkvision 60 ft., keen sight; Listen +10, Spot +14
Languages Aquan, Kuo-Toan, Undercommon

AC 24, touch 17, flat-footed 22
(+2 Dex, +5 Wis, +1 armor, +6 natural)
hp 42 (6 HD)
Immune paralysis, poison
Resist electricity 10, evasion, slippery
Fort +7, **Ref** +10, **Will** +13 (+15 against enchantment)
Weakness light blindness

Speed 30 ft. (6 squares), swim 50 ft.
Melee unarmed strike +7 (1d8+2) or
Melee unarmed strike +5/+5 (1d8+2) with flurry of blows
Ranged mwk light crossbow +8 (1d8)
Base Atk +5; **Grp** +7
Atk Options Combat Reflexes, Mind-Shattering Strike (DC 18), Stunning Fist 4/day (DC 18), *ki* strike (magic)
Combat Gear *potion of bear's endurance, potion of bull's strength, potion of shield of faith* (+3)

Abilities Str 14, Dex 14, Con 15, Int 12, Wis 20, Cha 6
SQ amphibious, slow fall 20 ft.
Feats Alertness^{B}, Combat Expertise, Combat Reflexes^{B}, Improved Unarmed Strike^{B}, Kuo-Toan Monasticism*, Mind-Shattering Strike*, Stunning Fist^{B}
* New feat; see sidebar.
Skills Balance +4, Diplomacy +0, Escape Artist +10, Hide +7, Jump +4, Knowledge (religion) +4, Listen +10, Move Silently +7, Search +8, Sense Motive +10, Spot +14, Swim +10, Tumble +10
Possessions combat gear plus *bracers of armor +1, cloak of resistance +1*

Keen Sight (Ex) As the crazed kuo-toa.
Slippery (Ex) As the crazed kuo-toa.
Light Blindness (Ex) As the crazed kuo-toa.

Kuo-toa monitors serve as tactical commanders and skilled melee combatants. Kuo-toan society is full of warriors, and monitors direct these soldiers against an enemy. Yet monitors serve a greater purpose. They are the caretakers of kuo-toan civilization, forming a sort of secret police dedicated to stamping out madness, controlling kuo-toas who tumble into insanity, and maintaining order within a shrine.

Strategies and Tactics

A monitor fights alone only if cornered. Otherwise, she relies on a group of kuo-toa warriors. The monitor dashes forward, stuns or uses Mind-Shattering Strike against an opponent, then allows her underlings to charge forward. Monitors particularly enjoy picking off enemies who have lost their weapons to the adhesive of a kuo-toa shield.

NEW FEATS

Kuo-toa monitors use their own brand of martial arts.

KUO-TOAN MONASTICISM

The monitors learn to use the strange, sticky substance common to kuo-toas as part of their martial arts. If a monitor's first punch hits, it sticks its hand to the target, executes an acrobatic tumble, and unfailingly lands its second strike.

Prerequisites: Kuo-toa, flurry of blows.

Benefit: As a swift action, a kuo-toa can smear a strange, sticky substance on its hands. When using flurry of blows, the kuo-toa automatically hits with one of its extra attacks if its first attack hits. A kuo-toa that has this feat uses Hit Dice, rather than character level, to determine its Stunning Fist save DC.

MIND-SHATTERING STRIKE

Violent madness lurks just beneath the surface in all kuo-toas. The monitors learn to control this madness and channel it into their enemies.

Prerequisites: Kuo-toa, Kuo-Toa Monasticism, Stunning Fist, flurry of blows.

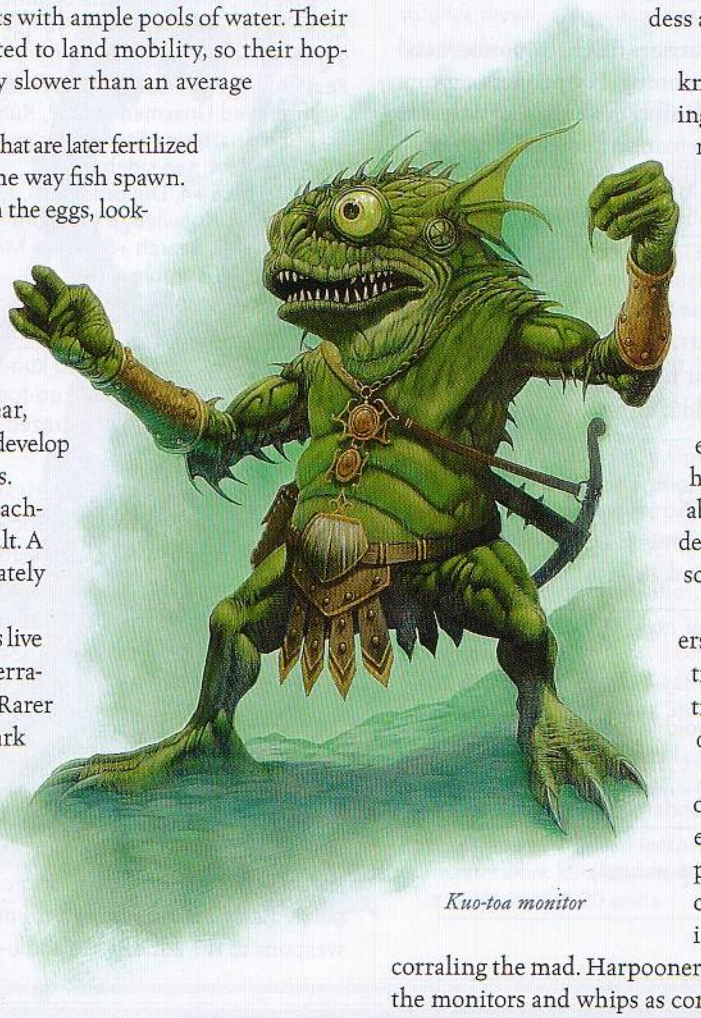
Benefit: Before making an unarmed strike, a kuo-toa monitor can choose to use this feat, consuming one of the monitor's daily uses of the Stunning Fist feat. If kuo-toa monitor's next unarmed attack hits, the struck opponent must make a Will save (DC 10 + 1/2 the monitor's HD + its Wis modifier). On a failed save, that foe attacks the closest non–kuo-toa on his next turn.

This feat also grants one additional daily use of the Stunning Fist feat.

Monitors create a deadly combination with their Kuo-Toan Monasticism feat and Mind-Shattering Strike or Stunning Fist. If a monitor's first attack of a flurry of blows hits, she uses Stunning Fist or Mind-Shattering Strike to augment her second sure strike. Against particularly dangerous foes, she uses both.

ECOLOGY

Kuo-toas are warm-blooded amphibious creatures built for swimming. Although they breathe air as well as water, they prefer damp environments with ample pools of water. Their long legs are not well suited to land mobility, so their hopping movement is usually slower than an average human's land speed.



Kuo-toa monitor

Illus. by W. England

Kuo-toa females lay eggs that are later fertilized by male kuo-toas, much the way fish spawn. Young kuo-toas hatch from the eggs, looking like a cross between tadpoles and large fish. When they hatch, they can breathe only water and are about 1 foot in height. Over the next year, they grow to 3 feet tall and develop their amphibious qualities.

By the time a kuo-toa reaches five years old, it is an adult. A kuo-toa lives to approximately sixty years of age.

Environment: Kuo-toas live in waters within the subterranean reaches of the earth. Rarer clans live in deep and dark temperate ocean waters.

Typical Physical Characteristics: Kuo-toas are pudgy and covered with fine scales. Looking like a cross between a fish and a frog, they have large mouths, oversized staring eyes, and long limbs that look spindly. This appearance is deceptive, because even though kuo-toas are only about 5 feet tall and weigh 160 pounds, they are tough and strong.

The most telling feature of kuo-toas is their skin, which smells like rotting fish. Silvery gray in color, the skin of a kuo-toa changes hue according to the creature's emotions. Crazed kuo-toas can change color rapidly, but they are usually red with agitation and anger.

Alignment: Kuo-toas are selfish and greedy, always ready to bully or mistreat others, including less powerful kuo-toas. Because of this mindset, only fear of those stronger than they or of punishment by the authorities in a community keeps the majority of kuo-toas in line. Smart kuo-toas know that the way to dominance lies in organization, but those with power abuse that authority and their underlings to the extent that they can. They are often neutral evil.

SOCIETY

Kuo-toas dwell in small settlements known as shrines. Each shrine is dedicated to Blibdoolpoolp, and smaller shrines radiate out from larger settlements. All spaces within a shrine show evidence of religious fervor, with icons, carvings, and other works depicting the bizarre goddess and rituals of the kuo-toas.

Within the shrines, clerics known as whips are supreme, ruling over other kuo-toas by divine right. All kuo-toan leaders are clerics, though a lot of them are also practiced in subterfuge or other forms of martial training. A few shrines are blessed by the presence of one or more exalted whips, kuo-toas that are favored by Blibdoolpoolp to be superior in every way to their kin. Kuo-toas high in the chain of command abuse and intimidate their underlings to instill fear and prevent scheming for power.

Without the aid of their lessers, however, whips would have trouble controlling the ambitious and calculating masses of the shrines. Specialized social classes form the backbone of the kuo-toan fighting forces. Monitors watch over the population like secret police, culling the weak, killing or imprisoning the criminal, and corraling the mad. Harpooners work as elite soldiers, aiding the monitors and whips as commanded, remorselessly killing anything from intruders to other kuo-toas.

Other adult kuo-toas are capable warriors, but they also work at crafts and trades, the results of which go to support the shrine or to honor Blibdoolpoolp. Skill and merit determine an individual's rise in kuo-toan society. But it's easier to plot against and even murder one's fellows and superiors to get ahead.

Fear, paranoia, and depravity are as much a part of kuo-toan culture as religion is. More than a few kuo-toas break under the strain of living under this cycle of cruelty and suspicion, becoming unhinged. Others spontaneously descend into madness during dark rituals dedicated to Blibdoolpoolp. Regardless of the initial nature of the malady, an insane kuo-toa becomes a howling, bloodthirsty maniac when attacked or injured.

Madness on an individual scale poses enough of a risk to kuo-toan civilization, but kuo-toas face an even worse threat. Mental illness is contagious among these creatures—like a disease, emerging lunacy seemingly hops from one kuo-toa to the next. Those kuo-toas afflicted in this manner adopt the symptoms and actions of the initial victim. A weaponsmith in the grip of a psychopathic episode might cut down a hapless laborer, and some of the kuo-toas who witness the crime might also enter a psychopathic state. A small cluster of nearby kuo-toas could soon join a lone one that enters a fugue. Fortunately for kuo-toas, only about 10% of those who witness another kuo-toa's insanity fall victim to the same mental illness, and only the initial break of a sane kuo-toa causes others to join the madness. Even moments afterward, the communal nature of the insanity is gone. But the initial episode can be enough for a shrine to fall into chaos if the spread is left unchecked. Monitors, whips, and other disciplined kuo-toas seem immune to this problem.

Whips dispatch monitors and harpooners to handle out-of-control kuo-toas that sometimes run through the community on murderous sprees or ensnare other kuo-toas in their broken worldviews. Such an individual is killed, escorted outside the shrine, or shepherded to a special holding cell built into the walls of important defensive points in the settlement. When the shrine comes under assault, those cells open to unleash dozens of insane kuo-toas upon the attackers. The screeching of these imprisoned crazed kuo-toas gives a shrine a chilling aspect, a testament to the degeneracy of kuo-toan society.

KUO-TOA LORE

Characters who have ranks in Knowledge (nature) can learn more about kuo-toas. When a character makes a successful skill check, the following lore is revealed, including the information from lower DCs.

Knowledge (Nature)

DC	Result
12	Kuo-toas are amphibious, fishlike humanoids that have a complex society that exists underground and in the lightless depths of the sea. They are sinister, but they know much about the hidden truths and places in the world. Kuo-toa skin secretes a substance that makes the creatures difficult to grab. They distill this substance into a gluelike material that they apply to their shields, allowing them to trap opponents' weapons.
17	Kuo-toas fight with strange weapons designed to incapacitate rather than kill. They love to take slaves and sacrifices for their goddess, Blibdoolpoolp. Their society is divided into a hierarchy of slaves, citizens, warriors, and priests. They are immune to poison and paralysis, and resistant to electricity. They can't stand bright light.
22	The sensitive eyes of kuo-toas can spot the movement of an invisible creature. Their clerics, known as whips, can work together to produce lightning bolts. Blibdoolpoolp sometimes blesses a kuo-toa clan with the birth of an exalted whip, a monstrously powerful creature with the power to aid evil aquatic creatures.

TYPICAL TREASURE

Kuo-toas collect coins for trade, and they make icons and art dedicated to Blibdoolpoolp. Whips and monitors have a particular interest in magic items. Kuo-toas have standard treasure for their Challenge Rating, and elite members of kuo-toan society have standard equipment for NPCs of their Challenge Rating.

KUO-TOAS WITH CLASS LEVELS

Kuo-toas typically advance as rogues, but harpooners are fighters, monitors are monks, and whips are clerics. Kuo-toa leaders often take levels in cleric and rogue, combining dedication to Blibdoolpoolp with abilities that provide an easier means to get ahead in the devious kuo-toan social order. All these classes are associated classes for kuo-toas.

Kuo-toa clerics worship Blibdoolpoolp, who provides access to the domains of Destruction, Evil, and Water.

Level Adjustment: +3.

KUO-TOAS IN EBERRON

Since the Age of Demons, kuo-toas have swum the unfathomable seas and twisting waterways of Khyber. They have forgotten more dark secrets than the wise on Eberron's surface know, and they harbor knowledge that more than one power-hungry magician might kill for. Their perverse society is dedicated to the coiling Dragon Below, their madness rooted in creatures and enigmas extant long before the daelkyr crippled the Dhakaani Empire. Kuo-toan civilization is dominant in the subterranean reaches under Khorvaire, where they make hideous deals with the children of the lords of Xoriat, emerging only to sell Khyber dragonshards to those brave or wicked enough to deal with them. Kuo-toan realms also exist in Khyber underneath Aerenal, Xen'drik, and in nearby oceans, but they are absent below the continents of Sarlona and Argonnessen.

KUO-TOAS IN FAERÛN

Kuo-toas dwell in the Underdark, where they live in a theocratic society dedicated to Blibdoolpoolp, whom they call the Sea Mother. (It is rumored, however, that a few kuo-toas have turned from the Sea Mother to Shar and her Shadow Weave.) In Faerûn, kuo-toas are closely allied with the drow, going so far as to treat dark elves and their slaves as honorary kuo-toas. Every other race the kuo-toas treat as inferior or as prey. The kuo-toas of the Underdark have a sacred shrine known as the Holy Mother Cauldron to which every kuo-toa travels at least once in its life. Another major settlement is Sloopdilmonpolop, a major trading center and source of water in the Old Shanatar region of the Underdark under Tethyr's Firedrake Bay. For more information on kuo-toas in Faerûn, see the *Underdark* supplement.

MALASTOR

An enormous creature covered in plates of stone bursts from the ground before you. It rears up on its rear limbs to swing two great claws in your direction as it gnashes its teeth.

MALASTOR **CR 16**
Usually CE Gargantuan magical beast
Init +6; **Senses** blindsight 1,200 ft., tremorsense 1,200 ft.; Listen +18, Spot +15
Languages —

AC 34, touch 8, flat-footed 32
(–4 size, +2 Dex, +26 natural)
hp 290 (20 HD)
Fort +21, **Ref** +14, **Will** +13

Speed 50 ft. (10 squares), burrow 50 ft.
Melee bite +27 (3d8+10/19–20) and
2 claws +22 each (3d6+5/19–20)
Space 20 ft.; **Reach** 20 ft.
Base Atk +20; **Grp** +42
Atk Options Combat Reflexes
Special Actions avalanche wave, stunning roar

Abilities Str 30, Dex 14, Con 28, Int 2, Wis 20, Cha 10
SA avalanche wave, stunning roar
Feats Combat Reflexes, Improved Critical (bite), Improved Critical (claw), Improved Initiative, Iron Will, Weapon Focus (bite), Weapon Focus (claw)
Skills Listen +18, Spot +15
Advancement 21–30 HD (Gargantuan); 31–40 HD (Colossal)

Avalanche Wave (Su) A malastor can attack at range by reaching into the earth with its powerful claws and sending a shock wave through the ground. A 10-foot-tall wave of earth moves in a 400-foot line, dealing 8d6 points of damage (Reflex DC 22 half). Those who fail the save are also buried under rubble and debris. A buried creature takes 1d6 points of nonlethal damage per minute. One creature can uncover another in 4 minutes (or see Cave-Ins and Collapses, *DMG* 67–68). A buried creature can free itself with a DC 25 Strength check. The save DC is Dexterity-based.

A malastor can adapt its avalanche wave to hurl a chunk of earth at a flying creature up to 400 feet above the ground. When doing so, the malastor can target only one creature. The Reflex save has the same DC, and a successful hit brings the flyer to earth and buries it as normal.

The avalanche wave functions only on normal earth, though the presence of vegetation doesn't affect it.

Stunning Roar (Su) Whenever it takes hit point damage for the first time in a round, a malastor emits a dreadful roar as an immediate action. Those within a 30-foot-radius spread must succeed on a DC 26 Fortitude save or be stunned for 1 round. The save DC is Charisma-based and includes a +6 racial bonus.

Malastors spend most of their lives sleeping in the ground, emerging occasionally to feed or breed. When they do emerge, they devastate large areas of the countryside.

STRATEGIES AND TACTICS

A malastor is violent and eagerly initiates fights. Despite its apparent stupidity, it adapt its tactics and uses its burrow speed to flee if it is losing.

When fighting opponents with shorter reach, a malastor advances to bring the opponents just within its own threatened area. This allows the malastor to attack freely, but an opponent closing to attack must leave a threatened square. A malastor has Combat Reflexes, allowing it to use this tactic with multiple enemies in a given round.

A malastor has no control over its stunning roar, which is an instinctive reaction to damage. However, it does take advantage of the effect of the roar, concentrating its attacks on stunned opponents.

Malastors prefer to use melee attacks, but their avalanche wave ability allows them to attack enemies at a distance. Blindsight lets them attack invisible enemies as well. A malastor that has been injured by a spellcaster might focus its attacks on that character, using avalanche wave, then moving away from any melee opponents. This tactic can force melee opponents to provoke attacks of opportunity again when they move within its reach, giving the creature the best of both worlds.

SAMPLE ENCOUNTER

A malastor is encountered only when it emerges from the earth to feed or mate (see Ecology). Finding any malastor is easy—just follow its path of destruction.

Mated Pair (EL 18): Almost a year ago, a male and a female malastor devastated the countryside to build the incubation heap for their eggs. Since then, they have been guarding the enormous heap, waiting for the eggs to hatch—and the time has almost come. If the PCs can defeat the adult malastors, they might be able to destroy the eggs. If not, the destruction the parents wrought could pale in comparison

MALASTOR LORE

Characters who have ranks in Knowledge (nature) can learn more about malastors. When a character makes a successful skill check, the following lore is revealed, including the information from lower DCs.

Knowledge (Nature)

DC	Result
26	This is a malastor, a magical beast with a rocky hide. Malastors have blindsight out to an incredible distance and are very perceptive. It is almost impossible to sneak up on them.
31	A malastor can create a tremendous wave of earth that can bury its foes.
36	Whenever a malastor is wounded, it emits a terrible roar that can stun those around it, although this effect soon wears off. A malastor is wily enough to attack stunned opponents.

to what follows when four young, reckless malastors are set loose.

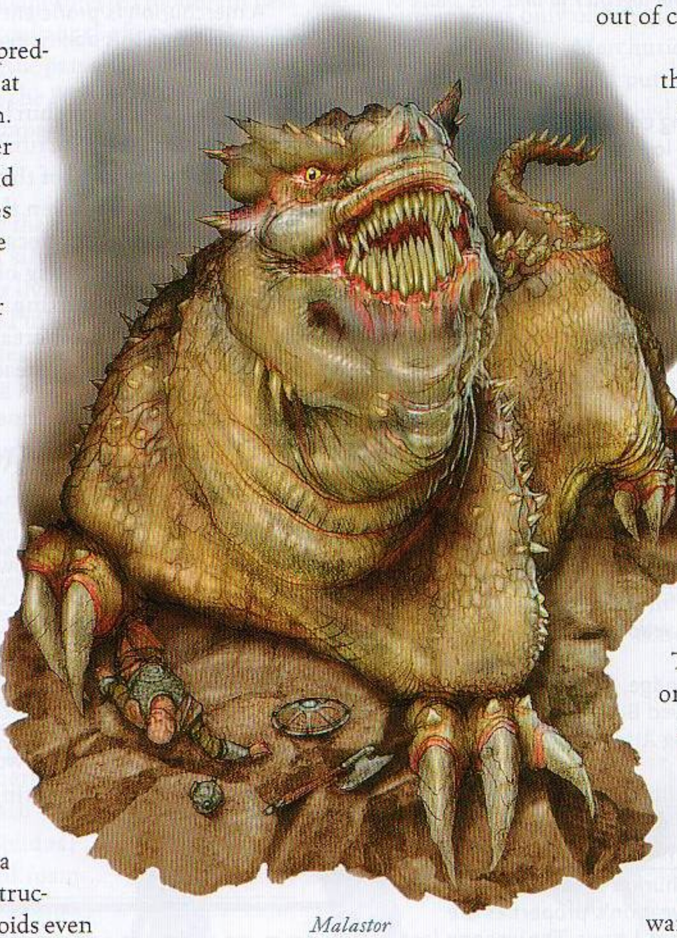
The adult malastors attack anyone who comes within 30 feet of the heap or attacks it, pursuing and slaying those who flee. The parents split up to deal with various threats.

ECOLOGY

Malastors are destructive predators that sit comfortably at the top of the food chain. It is fortunate for all other creatures that they spend nine-tenths of their lives asleep, burrowed into the ground.

An average malastor emerges from the ground once per year to feed, cutting a swath of destruction as it does so. Normally, a malastor spends ten to twenty days feeding and moving across the land before burrowing back into the ground.

Once in every human generation, a malastor is instinctually driven to mate. It leaves the ground and wanders, looking for a malastor of the opposite sex. While wandering, a malastor is much less destructive than normal, and it avoids even small settlements.



Malastor

Illus. by A. Swekel

This behavior changes when the creature meets its mate. The pair devastates the surrounding area, piling dead animals and vegetation into an enormous, rotting heap, within which the female lays her eggs. The warmth of the heap incubates the eggs, while the organic material there provides the first food for the newly hatched malastors. The two parents then stand guard over the heap for the year it takes the eggs to mature and hatch. During this period, they are hostile to anyone approaching the mound, but do not range far from the heap.

When the parents hear the telltale sounds of the hatching offspring, they flee in different directions, normally running for at least two days before burying themselves in the earth. At about the same time, between two and four new malastors start eating their way out of the incubation mound. They are full size, thanks to the prepared food, but ravenous, and split up to spend ten to twenty days eating before burying themselves in the ground to start the cycle again.

Environment: Malastors prefer temperate plains and hills, although they are occasionally found in temperate forests and warm plains. Deserts and mountains almost never provide enough food for them, although a malastor looking for a mate might decide to cross such terrain. The creatures do not like the cold, so they stay out of cold regions.

Malastors cannot burrow through hard rock, so they sleep in areas with deep soil, or with sandstone and similar softer rocks. While feeding or searching, however, they cross any sort of terrain, leaving devastation behind them.

Typical Physical Characteristics: A malastor has four limbs, a powerful body, and a head with a blunt snout. Its body is covered with plates of stone, which form as it sleeps in the earth, but under the armor it is flesh and blood. The color of the plates depends on the environment where the malastor last slept, but they are often the warm orange of sandstone.

The two rear limbs are quite close together. The front pair is much farther forward and somewhat longer. Each forelimb ends in enormous claws, which a malastor uses to great effect in combat. These claws also enable it to burrow and to scoop earth from the ground to hurl at its enemies.

When fighting, a malastor rears up on its hind legs and stands about 40 feet tall. Most malastors weigh around 40 tons, but larger specimens exist.

Alignment: Malastors enjoy spreading destruction and have no sense of the importance of organization, so most are chaotic evil.

TYPICAL TREASURE

Malastors have no interest in treasure. The reward for defeating a malastor often comes from the grateful people the victors have saved. Mated pairs of malastors have half standard treasure, which can be found among and on the corpses in the birthing heap.

MERCHURION

A metal colossus strides through the trees, its form shifting and flowing like liquid. The creature moves with a grace that belies its powerful humanlike form, and you see that its metallic sheen is no suit of armor. Its eyes bear the same gleam as the rivers of silver running down its arms, which flow together to take the shape of a vicious battleaxe.

MERCHURION **CR 17**

Usually CE Huge construct (living construct)
Init +7; **Senses** darkvision 60 ft., low-light vision; Listen +10, Spot +10
Languages Common, Giant, Terran

AC 31, touch 15, flat-footed 24; Dodge, Mobility (–2 size, +7 Dex, +16 natural)
hp 319 (22 HD); **DR** 10/magic and silver
Immune fire, living construct immunities
Weakness vulnerability to sonic
Fort +16, **Ref** +14, **Will** +11

Speed 60 ft. (12 squares); Spring Attack
Melee *+3 silvered battleaxe* +28/+23/+18/+13 (3d6+12)
Space 15 ft.; **Reach** 15 ft.
Base Atk +16; **Grp** +33
Atk Options Awesome Blow, Cleave, Improved Bull Rush, Power Attack, absorb properties, magic strike
Special Actions generate weapon

Abilities Str 28, Dex 25, Con 28, Int 10, Wis 14, Cha 17
SA absorb properties, generate weapons, magic strike
SQ living construct traits
Feats Awesome Blow, Cleave, Dodge, Greater Weapon Focus (generated weapon)^{B}, Improved Bull Rush, Iron Will, Mobility, Power Attack, Spring Attack, Weapon Focus (generated weapon)^{B}
Skills Climb +17, Intimidate +12, Jump +29, Listen +10, Spot +10, Survival +11
Advancement 23–26 HD (Huge); 27–34 HD (Gargantuan)

Absorb Properties (Ex) If a merchurion is successfully struck by a magic weapon, all that weapon's properties are absorbed by the merchurion for 1 hour. The weapon loses its properties during that time (or until the merchurion is slain). A merchurion can manifest any of these absorbed properties in its generated weapon.

A merchurion can absorb and manifest weapon properties totaling a +5 enhancement bonus (*DMG* 223) or a market value of up to 50,000 gp. Properties beyond these limits are not absorbed. If a weapon has properties in excess of these limits, the weakest properties are absorbed first.

As an immediate action, a merchurion can choose to give up absorbed properties to absorb new properties. If it does so, the properties the merchurion gives up are restored to the weapon they were absorbed from.

Manifested weapon properties must be suitable for the type of weapon a merchurion generates. Unsuitable properties can be absorbed and count toward the total limit of properties even if they cannot be manifested. For example, a merchurion could absorb the disruption property from a *mace of disruption,* but could not manifest that property in a battleaxe.

A merchurion does not absorb the enhancement bonus from a weapon whose properties it absorbs. So, weapons that lose properties continue to function with their magical enhancement bonus as normal.

Generate Weapon (Su) A merchurion can spontaneously create a single weapon from its flowing metal form. Such weapons have a +3 enhancement bonus and are treated as silvered weapons for the purpose of overcoming damage reduction. If a generated weapon ever leaves the merchurion's hand, that weapon immediately melts into a pool of harmless silver liquid.

A merchurion is proficient with any weapon it generates using this ability, even an exotic one.

Legends speak of the merchurions, an ancient race of fire giants in the service of Surtur. Master metalsmiths, they were charged by the Lord of the Fire Giants with creating weapons that surpassed even the adamantine axes of the dwarves in combat. After decades of toil, the giants had produced only a strange slag of mercurial metal. Surtur was furious, savagely hurling all his followers into the magma rift that held their creation. The giants were not slain, however, emerging instead as construct creatures of living quicksilver.

STRATEGIES AND TACTICS

Merchurions are confident of their abilities in combat, and they waste no time before wading into the thick of melee. A merchurion uses Awesome Blow to scatter its foes, forcing them to spend time getting back into position before they can attack again. Whenever possible, a merchurion targets opponents wielding magic weapons in the hope of absorbing those weapons' properties. The living contruct might even bull rush through one foe to get at another. It fashions armaments to suit its tactics, using two-handed reach weapons to keep opponents at bay or fighting with smaller weapons in confined spaces.

MERCHURION LORE

Characters who have ranks in Knowledge (arcana) can learn more about merchurions. When a character makes a successful skill check, the following lore is revealed, including the information from lower DCs.

Knowledge (Arcana)

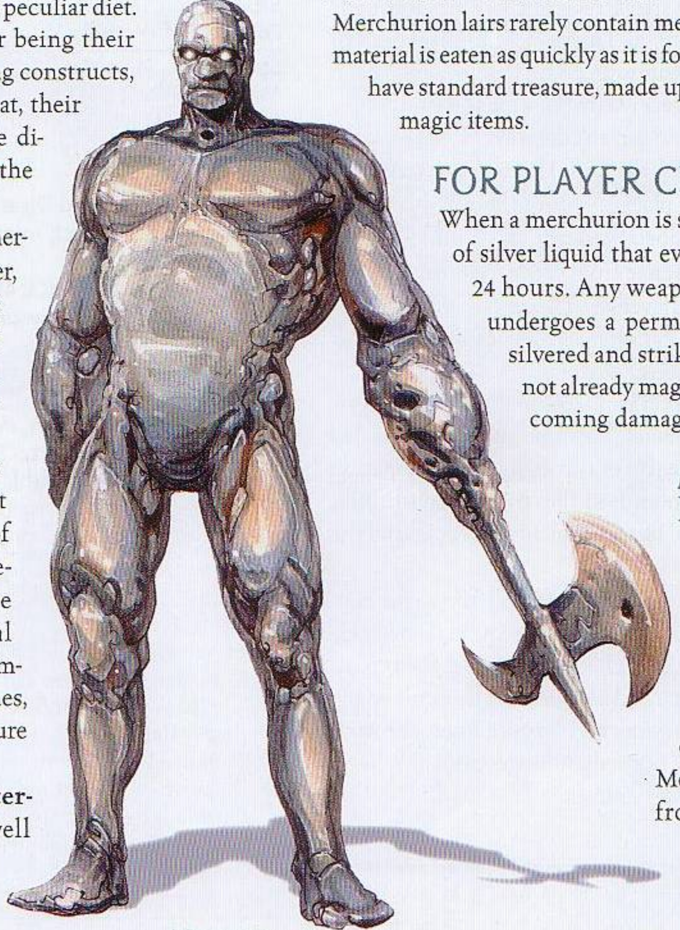
DC	Result
27	This rare and reclusive creature is no giant, but a merchurion—a powerful hulking menace of living metal. This result reveals all living construct traits.
32	Merchurions have the ability to shape magic weapons from their own bodies, but foes who engage these creatures in melee do so at their peril. Magic weapons that strike a merchurion have their properties absorbed and utilized in the creature's own attacks.
37	A slain merchurion immediately collapses to a pool of silvery liquid that retains some of the creature's magical essence. Weapons dipped in this liquid become silvered and strike as magic weapons against the toughest creatures.

SAMPLE ENCOUNTER

Merchurions are rare creatures that are usually solitary. They do form bands, but such groups have fewer than six members at a time.

Frontier Raider (EL 17): A merchurion is attacking a series of forts guarding a giant-infested mountain pass. The creature seems intent on acquiring the forts' metal munitions, but its doing so could leave the pass all but defenseless against a massive giant incursion. The PCs are charged with putting an end to the creature's rampage.

ECOLOGY



Merchurion

Merchurions are driven by their peculiar diet. They devour metal, with silver being their meal of choice. Though, as living constructs, merchurions have no need to eat, their mysterious craving dictates the direction of their wandering and the locations of their settlements.

Like other living constructs, merchurions do not reproduce. Rather, every merchurion in the world is one of the original members of this race, created in ages past. A dying race, these creatures produce no progeny.

Environment: Merchurions favor warm environs, and most of them inhabit the interiors of volcanic mountains. Others remain even farther beneath the surface of the earth. Individual merchurions can be found roaming everywhere but in arctic climes, seeking lost mines, ancient treasure hoards, and the like.

Typical Physical Characteristics: Merchurions appear well muscled, and their rippling silvery forms flow like liquid metal. They are far larger than the fire giants they are supposedly descended from, standing 20 feet tall and weighing twelve tons.

Alignment: Merchurions are disdainful of all would-be foes, especially true giants. They are virtually impossible to parlay with, neither asking for nor granting quarter in combat. Merchurions embrace a life of change and transformation, and they hate all other creatures. They tend strongly toward chaotic evil as a result.

SOCIETY

Merchurions are reclusive, shunning the company of other creatures and withdrawing into the volcanic inner reaches of the earth. Their lives are centered around an obsession with discovering a way to create more of their number. Merchurions seek allies with knowledge of crafting constructs in the hope of one day creating new generations of their kind.

These living constructs scorn other races as inferior. They are envious only of fire giants, whom merchurions view as Surtur's chosen. Merchurions have a deep sense of shame over their failure and punishment by Surtur. These mixed feelings turn to bloodshed whenever merchurions and fire giants meet.

TYPICAL TREASURE

Merchurion lairs rarely contain metal of any kind, since such material is eaten as quickly as it is found. But merchurions still have standard treasure, made up of gems and nonmetallic magic items.

FOR PLAYER CHARACTERS

When a merchurion is slain, it collapses to a pool of silver liquid that evaporates harmlessly after 24 hours. Any weapon dipped into this pool undergoes a permanent change, becoming silvered and striking as a magic weapon (if not already magic) for the purpose of overcoming damage reduction.

MERCHURIONS IN EBERRON

The merchurions of Eberron are an ancient race whose origins are shrouded in mystery, but which is no doubt connected to the ancient creation forges of Xen'drik. Merchurions have ranged far from the shattered land in the countless centuries since their creation, and one extended tribe now serves a powerful silver dragon named Azraxror-Shien on Argonnessen.

A neutral good merchurion named Silverfist resides in Thrane. The creature converted to the faith of the Silver Flame and is recognized as an icon by some clergy. His place in the church remains a source of debate.

MERCHURIONS IN FAERÛN

In recent years, adventurers delving beneath the volcanic areas of Chult have returned with tales of giant creatures of liquefied metal dwelling deep within the earth. These merchurions are rumored to covet metal and magic.

Illus. by C. Critchlow

MIND FLAYERS OF THOON

Mind flayers have long explored the cosmos beyond their underground lairs, traveling the Inner Planes and Outer Planes aboard vessels they call nautiloids. One such vessel, on a mission of exploration over a century ago, traveled farther than others. Setting a course for the uncharted reaches of the Astral Plane, the mind flayers crossed over into the Far Realm, a place of madness and disorder.

They returned or, perhaps, were sent back dramatically changed, capable of great feats of construct crafting and selective breeding. Though the physical changes were dramatic, the more profound change was to the very consciousness of those illithids. They now speak reverently of a being/god/philosophy known to them as Thoon. The mind flayers of Thoon claim to be able to commune with this presence from the Far Realm, as well as receive instructions from it.

So far those "instructions" haven't demonstrated any long-term purpose. The mind flayers of Thoon have traversed the planes, moving from place to out-of-the-way place and gathering a mysterious substance they call "quintessence." After collecting this substance from captured creatures and rare materials, the mind flayers of Thoon either store it in glowing ovoid structures called matrices or use it to power their constructs and bizarre creatures.

Most mind flayers of Thoon are identical to the mind flayers described in the *Monster Manual*, but others have been twisted by their time in the Far Realm or through experimentation with quintessence. This entry describes the altered illithids, along with their humanoid spies, construct servitors, and the Thoon elder brain.

Because of their strong connection to mind flayers, the non-illithid creatures described in this section require Knowledge (dungeoneering) for their lore checks instead of the typical skill. Because of the secrecy and obscurity of this cult, many lore DCs are also higher than normal. To even know the word "Thoon" requires a DC 20 Knowledge (dungeoneering) check, which is assumed in the lore entries.

Illus. by W. Reynolds

WHAT IS THOON?

Thoon could be anything from an epic-level outsider to a demigod to a full-fledged deity.

Thoon might also be nothing more than a guiding philosophy—the illithids' term for the collection of quintessence and the strange experiments that they conduct.

In fact, you don't necessarily need to decide what Thoon is. Thoon itself is likely to remain beyond the characters' direct knowledge—unless the PCs go into the Far Realm or Thoon somehow emerges into the rest of the D&D cosmology.

One of the reasons the PCs might find it difficult to learn about Thoon is that the mind flayers themselves are incapable of describing Thoon in detail, even under magical compulsion. They genuinely seem unable to understand questions such as "Is Thoon a god?" The mind flayers answer, "Thoon is Thoon, and Thoon is all!" Almost any question about Thoon's nature gets the same response.

THOON DISCIPLE

This human-shaped creature has an octopuslike head with four lashing tentacles. It is clad in ornate, heavy armor and wields a flail.

THOON DISCIPLE CR 10

Mind flayer cleric 4
NE Medium aberration
Init +5; **Senses** darkvision 60 ft.; Listen +13, Spot +13
Languages Undercommon; telepathy 100 ft.

AC 23, touch 11, flat-footed 22
(+1 Dex, +9 armor, +3 natural)
hp 90 (12 HD)
SR 25
Fort +9, **Ref** +4, **Will** +15

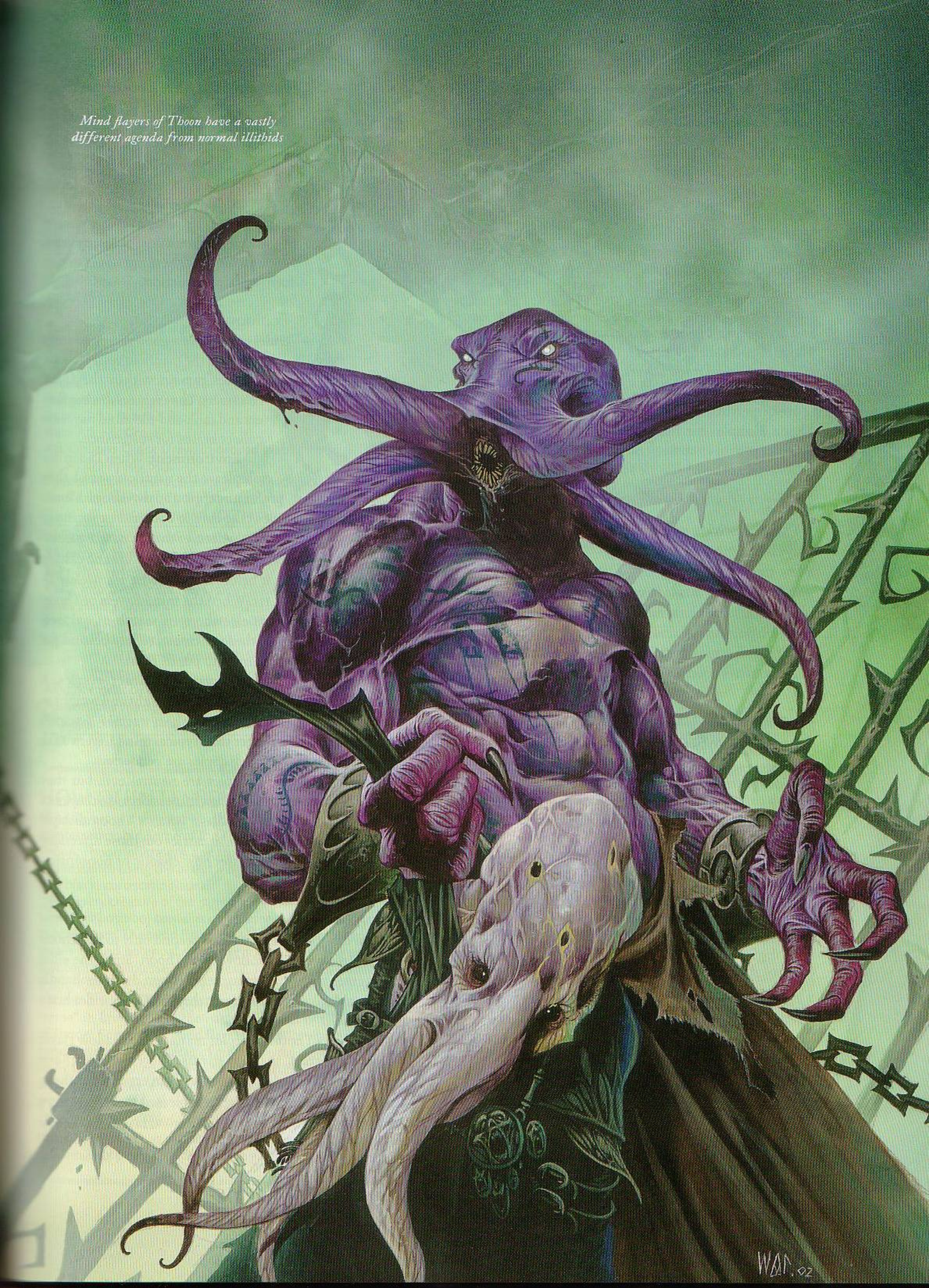
Speed 20 ft. (4 squares) in full plate, base speed 30 ft.
Melee 4 tentacles +11 each (1d4+1) or
Melee heavy flail +12/+7 (1d10+2/19–20)
Space 5 ft.; **Reach** 5 ft.
Base Atk +9; **Grp** +10
Atk Options Improved Disarm, improved grab
Special Actions extract, *mind blast*, rebuke undead 7/day (+6, 2d6+8, 4th)
Cleric Spells Prepared (CL 4th):
2nd—*cure moderate wounds, hold person* (2) (DC 17), *spiritual weapon*ᴰ
1st—*cure light wounds, divine favor, protection from good*ᴰ, *shield of faith* (2)
0—*cure minor wounds, detect magic* (3), *light*
D: Domain spell. Deity: Thoon. Domains: Evil, War.
Spell-Like Abilities (CL 8th):
At will—*charm monster* (DC 18), *detect thoughts* (DC 16), *levitate, plane shift, suggestion* (DC 17)

Abilities Str 12, Dex 12, Con 16, Int 20, Wis 21, Cha 19
SA extract, improved grab, *mind blast*, spell-like abilities, spells
Feats Ability Focus (*mind blast*), Combat Casting, Combat Expertise, Improved Disarm, Improved Initiative, Martial Weapon Proficiency (heavy flail), Weapon Focus (heavy flail)
Skills Bluff +14, Concentration +19, Diplomacy +15, Disguise +4 (+6 acting), Hide +4, Intimidate +10, Knowledge (religion) +15, Knowledge (the planes) +13, Listen +13, Move Silently +4, Sense Motive +9, Spellcraft +20, Spot +13
Possessions *+1 full plate, +1 heavy flail*

Improved Grab (Ex) To use this ability, a Thoon disciple must hit a creature of up to Large size with a tentacle attack. It can then attempt to start a grapple as a free action without provoking attacks of opportunity.

If it wins the grapple check, it establishes a hold and attaches a tentacle to the opponent's head. A Thoon disciple can grab a Huge or larger creature, but only if it can somehow reach the foe's head. If a Thoon disciple begins its turn with at least one tentacle attached, it can try to attach its remaining tentacles with a single grapple check. The opponent can escape with a single successful grapple check or an Escape Artist check, but the Thoon disciple gets a +2 circumstance bonus for every tentacle that was attached at the beginning of the opponent's turn.

Extract (Ex) If a Thoon disciple begins its turn with all four tentacles attached to its opponent and makes a successful grapple check, it extracts that opponent's



Mind flayers of Thoon have a vastly different agenda from normal illithids brain, instantly killing that creature. Constructs, elementals, oozes, plants, and undead are immune.

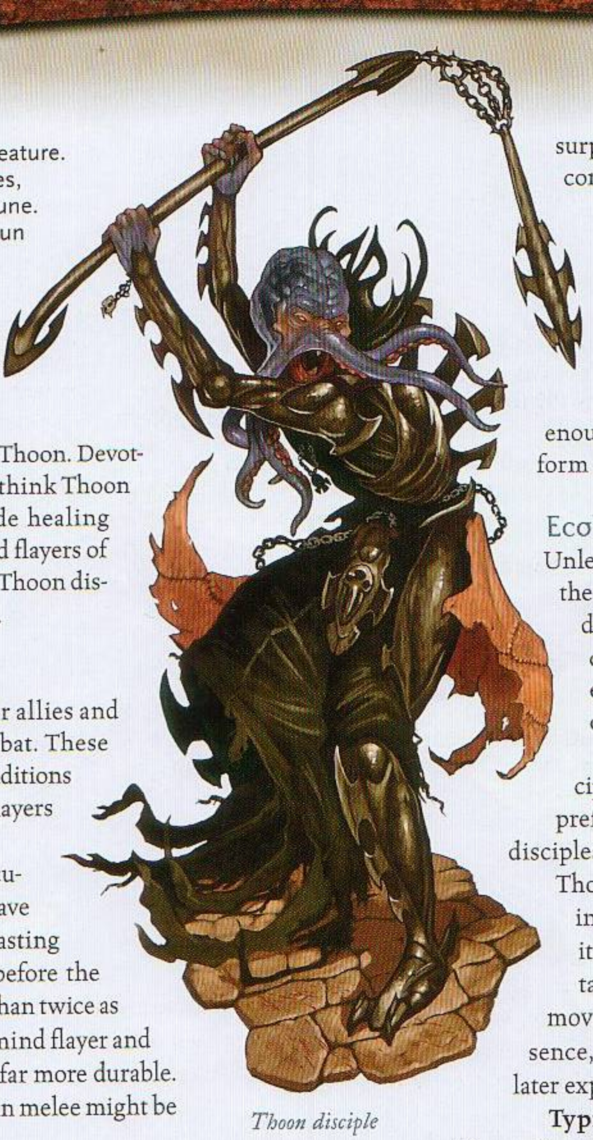
Mind Blast (Sp) 60-foot cone, stun for 3d4 rounds, Will DC 20 negates.

Next to the Thoon elder brain, Thoon disciples have the closest connection with the mysterious presence called Thoon. Devoted to whatever principles they think Thoon supports, these clerics provide healing and divine magic to other mind flayers of Thoon. Unlike shadow flayers, Thoon disciples are normal mind flayers.

Strategies and Tactics

Thoon disciples can heal their allies and hold their own in melee combat. These abilities make them versatile additions to encounters with the mind flayers of Thoon.

Thoon disciples are particularly challenging when they have a few rounds to prepare by casting *shield of faith* and *divine favor* before the battle begins. They have more than twice as many hit points as a standard mind flayer and much better armor, so they're far more durable. PCs who face Thoon disciples in melee might be surprised that these mind flayers are accomplished at disarming.



Thoon disciple

Illus. by W. Maby

Although a Thoon disciple can be effective as a melee combatant, it's equally deadly in the back ranks of a mind flayer force. A Thoon disciple has a potent *mind blast*, and it can often keep a *hold person* spell going long enough for another mind flayer to perform a brain extraction.

Ecology

Unless they have a good reason to leave the safety of the nautiloid vessel, Thoon disciples remain within the inner chambers. They rely on shadow flayers and rank-and-file mind flayers to collect brains for sustenance.

Environment: When Thoon disciples leave the nautiloid vessel, they prefer underground dwellings. Thoon disciples take care to construct a shrine to Thoon wherever they're based, gathering broken bits of treasure and casting it before an otherwise featureless altar. When the mind flayers of Thoon move elsewhere in search of quintessence, these shrines are left behind for later explorers to puzzle over.

Typical Physical Characteristics: A Thoon disciple is the same height and weight as a typical human. Because they wear heavy armor, disciples appear bulkier and stronger than typical mind flayers. Like other mind flayers, Thoon disciples are genderless.

Alignment: Thoon disciples are neutral evil, but they have a slight tendency toward lawfulness because they're in positions of authority. Regardless, when a Thoon disciple receives "visions from Thoon," it carries out those directions from the Far Realm, no matter how chaotic or nonsensical they seem.

Society

A Thoon disciple regards itself as second only to the Thoon elder brain among the followers of Thoon. Since the elder brain agrees with this assessment, Thoon disciples handle the day-to-day leadership chores that the Thoon elder brain can't do itself.

Because the Thoon disciples manage the shadow flayer breeding program, they eagerly use *suggestion* and *charm monster* to make shadow flayers perform errands for them. Many Thoon disciples are secretly pleased that the shadow flayers have diminished psionic ability—it makes the shadow flayers more pliable.

THOON DISCIPLE LORE

Characters who have ranks in Knowledge (dungeoneering) or Knowledge (religion) can learn more about Thoon disciples. When a character makes a successful skill check, the following lore is revealed, including the information from lower DCs.

Knowledge (Dungeoneering)

DC	Result
25	Thoon disciples are mind flayer war priests that wade into battle wearing heavy armor and swinging massive flails.
30	Thoon disciples aren't offensive spellcasters. They use their divine magic for emergency healing or to augment their defenses.
35	Thoon disciples are clerics with the Evil and War domains. They don't worship a god, necessarily, just a mysterious force called "Thoon."

Knowledge (Religion)

DC	Result
25	Thoon disciples worship a force—maybe a god, maybe not—called Thoon. Some explorers have found shrines to Thoon, consisting of plain altars with smashed, ruined treasure all around them.
30	Whatever Thoon is, it lies in a place beyond the planes called the Far Realm.

SHADOW FLAYER

In the shadows, you see a creature with jet-black skin. Four tentacles extend from its face, and two milky white eyes stare forth from the darkness of its form.

SHADOW FLAYER **CR 8**
Usually NE Medium aberration
Init +7; **Senses** darkvision 60 ft.; Listen +10, Spot +10
Languages Undercommon; telepathy 100 ft.

AC 16, touch 13, flat-footed 13
(+3 Dex, +3 natural)
hp 52 (8 HD)
SR 25
Fort +4, **Ref** +5, **Will** +8

Speed 30 ft. (6 squares)
Melee 4 tentacles +9 each (1d4+1) or
Melee mwk spear +10 (1d8+1/×3)
Ranged mwk dagger +10 (1d4+1/19–20 plus poison)
Space 5 ft.; **Reach** 5 ft.
Base Atk +6; **Grp** +7
Atk Options Quick Draw, improved grab, poison (DC 17, 1 Str drain/2d6 Str)
Special Actions extract, *mind blast*, shadowcloak
Spell-Like Abilities (CL 8th):
At will—*detect thoughts* (DC 14), *plane shift*

Abilities Str 12, Dex 16, Con 14, Int 19, Wis 15, Cha 15
SA extract, *mind blast*, shadowcloak, spell-like abilities
SQ poison use
Feats Improved Initiative, Quick Draw, Weapon Finesse
Skills Bluff +10, Concentration +12, Diplomacy +7, Disguise +2 (+4 acting), Hide +13, Intimidate +4, Knowledge (the planes) +10, Listen +10, Move Silently +13, Sense Motive +7, Spot +10, Survival +2 (+4 on other planes)
Advancement by character class; **Favored class** rogue
Possessions masterwork spear, 4 masterwork daggers (each poisoned with shadow essence)

Improved Grab (Ex) To use this ability, a shadow flayer must hit a creature of up to Large size with a tentacle attack. It can then attempt to start a grapple as a free action without provoking attacks of opportunity.

If it wins the grapple check, it establishes a hold and attaches a tentacle to the opponent's head. A shadow flayer can grab a Huge or larger creature, but only if it can somehow reach the foe's head. If a shadow flayer begins its turn with at least one tentacle attached, it can try to attach its remaining tentacles with a single grapple check. The opponent can escape with a single successful grapple check or an Escape Artist check, but the shadow flayer gets a +2 circumstance bonus for every tentacle that was attached at the beginning of the opponent's turn.

Extract (Ex) If a shadow flayer begins its turn with all four tentacles attached to its opponent and makes a successful grapple check, it extracts that opponent's brain, instantly killing that creature. Constructs, elementals, oozes, plants, and undead are immune.

Mind Blast (Sp) 60-foot cone, stun for 3d4 rounds, Will DC 16 negates.

Shadowcloak (Su) A shadow flayer can draw on its own inner stores of quintessence to briefly become invisible. By expending a swift action and taking 5 points of damage, a shadow flayer becomes invisible for 1 round. Unlike with the *invisibility* spell, shadowcloak doesn't end when a shadow flayer attacks.

Poison Use (Ex) A shadow flayer is skilled in the use of poison and never risks accidentally poisoning itself when applying poison to a weapon.

Though the followers of Thoon have many normal mind flayers among them, they also have shadow flayers, part of a breeding program that emphasizes stealth over psionic ability.

Strategies and Tactics

A shadow flayer is a monster that thrives on surprise. It's a good candidate for an ambush encounter, or it can appear

HOW QUINTESSENCE WORKS

Mind flayers can't predict what creatures and substances contain quintessence, but some of the Thoon creatures (madcrafters of Thoon, Thoon infiltrators, and stormclouds of Thoon) can detect quintessence using the *detect magic* spell-like ability. It appears as a black, coruscating aura.

Not every creature of the same race (or every substance of the same composition) contains quintessence—its presence seems to be random. The mind flayers use Thoon infiltrators and Thoon thralls to find potential quintessence sources. If the creatures that contain quintessence are weak, Thoon thralls kidnap them. If not, the more powerful Thoon creatures go to work.

If mind flayers find quintessence in rare substances, they "mine" it, bringing it to the nautiloid vessel or to a madcrafter of Thoon. Sometimes mind flayers must dominate servitors to handle the menial aspects of quintessence collection. They do so by first undermining a community using Thoon infiltrators and Thoon thralls, employing traditional mind flayer abilities to crush what resistance remains in the weakened community.

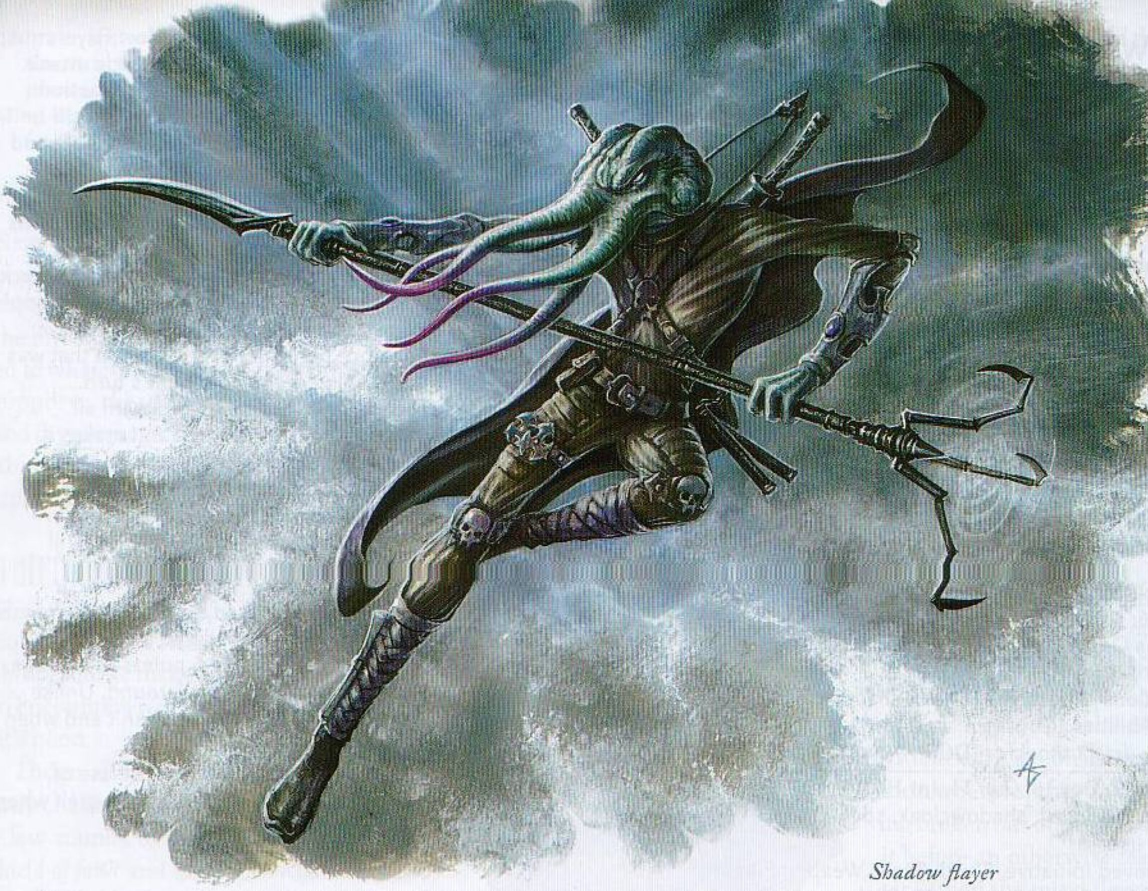
Extracted and refined quintessence is a green, glowing fluid. A typical source (such as a creature, a chunk of some rare mineral ore, or an unusual plant) provides about a gallon of liquid. Madcrafters of Thoon can store quintessence within themselves to create scythers of Thoon and stormclouds of Thoon, and the vast processors aboard the nautiloid ship store quintessence in their matrices. Each matrix holds about 10 gallons of quintessence.

Matrices of quintessence have a strong aura when viewed using *detect magic*. Smaller quantities of refined quintessence have a moderate or stronger aura, depending on the amount. The school of the magic is never clear.

If a PC is harvested for quintessence, it's harder to restore that character's life. Even if the surviving PCs save their comrade's body, the quintessence must be recovered for any spell short of *greater resurrection* to work.

Mind flayers of Thoon can garner quintessence from an extracted brain as well, although doing so ruins the ordinary nutrition value of the brain.

The most important game aspect of quintessence collection is that it proceeds at the speed of the plot. That is, if an adventure depends on the mayor's daughter, the iron ore in a nearby mine, or the PCs themselves being strong potential sources of quintessence, then you're well within your rights to make it so. As a DM, you have better things to do than track exactly how much quintessence the mind flayers are gathering and expending.



Shadow flayer

Illus. by A. Stokes

in the middle of the fight to give the PCs one more thing to worry about.

Like traditional mind flayers, shadow flayers are less durable than other monsters of their Challenge Rating. Shadow flayers are also somewhat less versatile, since they don't have all the enchantment-based psionic abilities that regular mind flayers have. With their ability to quickly turn invisible, they're better at the tentacle attacks that lead to brain extraction.

Shadow flayers usually carry daggers coated with shadow essence, a potent but slow-acting poison. If they are facing a significant foe, they use shadowcloak, fling their daggers from a safe hiding place, then flee. After a minute, when the poison has run its course, they return, shadowcloaking again to surprise weakened PCs with tentacle attacks and grapples.

Ecology

Shadow flayers are physiologically similar to mind flayers, but a shadow flayer has a less prominent cranium and a correspondingly less powerful mind. Shadow flayers eat brains and reproduce as mind flayers do.

Environment: Shadow flayers call the nautiloid vessel home, but they venture farther from it than other mind flayers of Thoon do. When the nautiloid enters an underground cave or other hidden lair, shadow flayers play a key role in the initial scouting effort—at least until Thoon infiltrators and thralls can be crafted.

Typical Physical Characteristics: A shadow flayer is the same height and weight as a human. Like mind flayers, they are genderless. The only obvious differences from normal mind flayers are the shadow flayer's jet-black skin and slightly smaller cranium.

Alignment: Shadow flayers are usually neutral evil. They have a slightly chaotic tendency that breeding hasn't yet stamped out.

Society

Shadow flayers see themselves as spies and hunters for Thoon. They're haughty about their ability to infiltrate places unseen and their ability to bring back brains.

SHADOW FLAYER LORE

Characters who have ranks in Knowledge (dungeoneering) can learn more about shadow flayers. When a character makes a successful skill check, the following lore is revealed, including the information from lower DCs.

Knowledge (Dungeoneering)

DC	Result
18	This is a shadow flayer, a mind flayer with ebony skin. It can turn invisible at will.
23	These dark-skinned mind flayers are part of a breeding program under the guidance of Thoon. They can briefly turn invisible, but doing so is painful—perhaps the breeding program isn't perfected yet.
28	One side effect of the breeding process that leads to shadow flayers is diminished psionic ability. They're incapable of any subtle psionic tricks, but their *mind blast* remains potent.

Shadow flayers have a natural rivalry with Thoon thralls, which are individually much weaker but often make better spies because they're so well disguised. The Thoon elder brain sometimes has to discipline shadow flayers who treat Thoon thralls too cruelly.

Shadow flayers also take pains to distinguish themselves from "ordinary" mind flayers, pointing out their controlled breeding. Each shadow flayer believes that it is the acme of mind flayer evolution, purpose-bred to do the will of Thoon.

THOON INFILTRATOR

Everything about this person seems normal, until you see the cluster of metallic tentacles protruding from the back of the neck.

THOON INFILTRATOR **CR 5**
Always CE Medium monstrous humanoid
Init +3; **Senses** darkvision 60 ft.; Listen +1, Spot +1
Languages Common; telepathy 100 ft. (only with Thoon thrall)

AC 16, touch 13, flat-footed 13; Dodge
(+3 Dex, +3 armor)
hp 37 (5 HD); fast healing 5; eventual comeback
Fort +4, **Ref** +7, **Will** +5

Speed 30 ft. (6 squares)
Melee rapier +8 (1d6+2/18–20)
Ranged throat dart +8 (1d4+2 plus poison)
Space 5 ft.; **Reach** 5 ft.
Base Atk +5; **Grp** +7
Atk Options poison (DC 15, 1d6 Wis/1d6 Wis)
Special Actions spawn thrall, submerge tentacles
Spell-Like Abilities (CL 5th):
At will—*detect magic*
3/day—*charm person* (DC 14)
1/day—*dimension door*

Abilities Str 14, Dex 16, Con 17, Int 18, Wis 13, Cha 17
SA poison, spawn thrall, spell-like abilities, throat dart
Feats Dodge, Sense Quintessence*
* New feat; see sidebar.
Skills Balance +5, Bluff +11, Diplomacy +15, Disguise +11 (+13 acting), Hide +11, Intimidate +5, Jump +4, Listen +1, Move Silently +11, Sense Motive +9, Spot +1, Tumble +11
Advancement by character class; **Favored Class** rogue
Possessions masterwork studded leather, masterwork rapier

Eventual Comeback (Ex) The Far Realm parasite that powers a Thoon infiltrator can survive the death of its host, then revive that host. When a Thoon infiltrator reaches –10 hit points, it doesn't actually die. All life functions cease, however, and the Thoon infiltrator is functionally a corpse for the purpose of resolving spells that affect dead bodies. It takes a DC 25 Search check to detect a slight vibration in the neck-tentacles that indicates that the creature is not fully dead. Removing the tentacles from the neck (a bloody process that requires a full-round action) kills a Thoon infiltrator for good.

If the tentacles aren't removed, a Thoon infiltrator can effectively resurrect itself. After it has spent a month in the near-death state, a Thoon infiltrator returns to consciousness at full normal hit points. It then frees itself from burial with *dimension door* and tries to reestablish contact with its mind flayer masters.

Throat Dart (Su) The tentacles that represent a Thoon infiltrator's parasite aspect can extend themselves up the infiltrator's throat and out its mouth, from where they can shoot a poison dart at a nearby target. The dart functions as a thrown weapon with a range increment of 10 feet.

Spawn Thrall (Su) If a Thoon infiltrator can spend an uninterrupted minute with a helpless humanoid, the infiltrator can turn it into a Thoon thrall by snaking its thin neck-tentacles into the victim's mouth. Sleeping creatures automatically awaken when a Thoon infiltrator attempts this, so it works only on creatures that are bound, magically *held,* or truly unconscious. A Thoon infiltrator can create one Thoon thrall per week in this manner.

Submerge Tentacles (Ex) A Thoon infiltrator usually hides its neck-tentacles with a cloak, high collar, or scarf. But if it expects close scrutiny, it can submerge the tentacles beneath the flesh, leaving only a rough patch of skin behind. Doing so takes a full-round action.

While its tentacles are submerged, a Thoon infiltrator can't use its spell-like abilities, throat dart, telepathy, or spawn thrall. If a Thoon infiltrator dies with its tentacles submerged, no search short of dismemberment can reveal the tentacles' presence, and the Thoon infiltrator's eventual comeback ability functions normally.

Skills The facial features of a Thoon infiltrator are as malleable as clay, granting the creature a +8 racial bonus on Disguise checks.

The parasitic Thoon infiltrator is an undercover spy for the mind flayers of Thoon, able to build secret networks of Thoon thralls while appearing as innocuous as an ordinary human.

Strategies and Tactics

A Thoon infiltrator is a good recurring villain for low-level PCs. In time, it can lead them into contact with the more powerful mind flayers of Thoon. It functions particularly well in the company of several Thoon thralls it has created.

In battle, a Thoon infiltrator is a capable sword-wielder, and it can surprise an unsuspecting PC with its throat darts. Perhaps more important is its ability to direct the actions of any Thoon thrall it is with. The mere presence of a Thoon infiltrator makes each Thoon thrall more effective.

Because the mind flayers of Thoon have only so many Far Realm parasites, each Thoon infiltrator is a precious resource. Fortunately for the illithids, a Thoon infiltrator can escape death at the hands of the PCs, either in the short term (by

WHY NOT A TEMPLATE?

Given how Thoon infiltrators come into being—a parasitic infestation at the hands of illithids—creating a template for them makes a certain amount of sense. Mechanically, though, it just isn't worth the effort because the template would change everything about the creature. When the local sheriff gets turned into a Thoon infiltrator, only his appearance and basic memories remain intact—the rest is a product of the mind flayer transformation. Thus, it's easier just to build the infiltrator as a normal monster and stipulate that it looks like whatever it was beforehand.

using *dimension door* when the PCs have the upper hand) or the long term (with its eventual comeback ability).

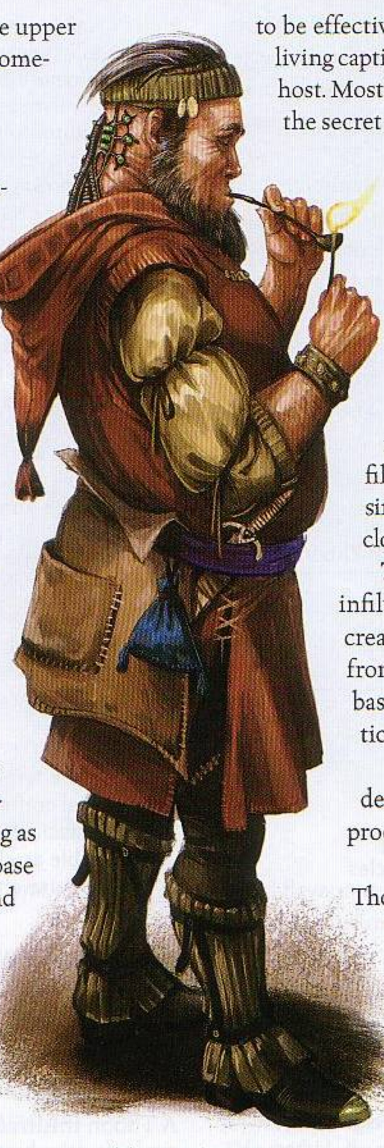
Ecology

The mind flayers had some living humanoid captives aboard their nautiloid vessel when they breached the Far Realm. To the illithids' surprise, the humanoids were quickly infected with a parasite native to the Far Realm, becoming Thoon infiltrators. The mind flayers' surprise turned to delight when they realized that a Thoon infiltrator could both impersonate "ordinary" folk and detect quintessence.

Since then, the mind flayers have learned a little more about the life cycle of the Thoon infiltrator parasite. In its unattached state, the parasite looks like a bundle of thin, metallic tentacles about the size of a housecat. When brought into proximity to a humanoid, the tentacles burrow into the brain and vital organs of the host creature, killing it, then reassembling the host body tissue by tissue. After a day of spasmodic twitching, the host body arises, appearing as it did before (other than the tentacles at the base of its skull) but wholly devoted to Thoon and the mind flayers.

The reconstituted body no longer needs to eat, sleep, or breathe, but it can do those things voluntarily if it wants to appear humanoid.

So far, the Thoon infiltrators' life span and means of reproduction are unknown to either the mind flayers or the infiltrators themselves. The mind flayers have developed a technique for transferring the parasite from one humanoid to another after an hour of gruesome surgery. They do so only when a Thoon infiltrator has become too notorious to be effective in the outside world, or when they have a living captive they think would make a particularly good host. Most Thoon infiltrators are out in the world doing the secret work of the mind flayers, so only a few unattached parasites are available to the mind flayers of Thoon at a given time.


Thoon infiltrator

Illus. by E. Widermann

The mind flayers of Thoon have experimented with different hosts for the Thoon infiltrator parasite, but so far, it accepts only a humanoid as a host.

Environment: A Thoon infiltrator prefers the same environment its host lived in before infestation, although this is strictly a matter of comfort and camouflage. Thoon infiltrators have a slight distaste for warmer climes, simply because humanoids there tend to wear less clothing, so it's harder to hide the neck-tentacles.

Typical Physical Characteristics: A Thoon infiltrator retains the height and weight of its host creature. In most cases, that's a human. Aside from the metallic tentacles projecting from the base of its skull, a Thoon infiltrator looks identical to a normal person.

Although Thoon infiltrators don't have genders, their hosts do. Thoon infiltrators never produce offspring.

Alignment: Unlike the other followers of Thoon, Thoon infiltrators are always chaotic evil. They chafe at the control of the mind flayers and grow impatient with the long-term plans for careful quintessence-gathering.

Society

Though a Thoon infiltrator is a monstrous humanoid in terms of game mechanics, it's an outsider from the Far Realm in terms

NEW FEAT: SENSE QUINTESSENCE

You are capable of discerning sources of quintessence, a magic substance precious to Thoon.

Prerequisites: *Detect magic* (as a spell or spell-like ability), affiliation with Thoon.

Benefit: When you use *detect magic*, you also detect any quantities of quintessence within the spell's area.

The amount of information revealed depends on how long you study a particular area or subject.

1st Round: Presence or absence of quintessence.

2nd Round: Number of different quintessence sources, and the size and potency (moderate or strong) of the most powerful quintessence source.

3rd Round: The location and potency of each quintessence source.

THOON INFILTRATOR LORE

Characters who have ranks in Knowledge (dungeoneering) can learn more about Thoon infiltrators. When a character makes a successful skill check, the following lore is revealed, including the information from lower DCs. A character who has ranks in Knowledge (nature) can attempt this check, but the DCs increase by 10.

Knowledge (Dungeoneering)

DC	Result
20	This is a Thoon infiltrator, a monstrous humanoid created by mind flayers. They are sent to infiltrate civilization to appease Thoon.
25	The creature's neck-tentacles grant some psionic abilities and the ability to create thralls. The person they are attached to is dead and gone, but the tentacles can animate the body and access its memories.
30	Detaching the tentacles and destroying them is the only way to truly kill one of these parasites.

of heritage. Unlike the other followers of Thoon, each Thoon infiltrator began life in the Far Realm and remembers something of its existence there.

Because the Far Realm is beyond the rest of the universe—and beyond reason itself—Thoon infiltrators remember their time there imperfectly, and those memories are almost impossible to convey to others. Each Thoon infiltrator has an aching desire to return to the madness of the Far Realm, and most believe that the ultimate goal of Thoon is a return to the Far Realm or an intrusion of the Far Realm into the rest of the universe.

THOON THRALL

Purple veins pop out from the person's skin as he—or perhaps it—gazes at you, wild-eyed.

Thoon Thrall, Human Commoner CR 3

Male Thoon thrall human commoner 1
LE Medium monstrous humanoid
Init +1; **Senses** darkvision 60 ft.; Listen +7, Spot +7
Languages Common; telepathy 100 ft. (only with Thoon infiltrator); thrall to Thoon infiltrator

AC 14, touch 11, flat-footed 13
(+1 Dex, +2 armor, +1 natural)
hp 14 (3 HD); dormancy; overdrive healing 5; immolate
Fort +3, **Ref** +4, **Will** +2

Speed 40 ft. (8 squares); 30 ft. when dormant
Melee spear +6 (1d8+4)
Ranged spear +4 (1d8+4)
Space 5 ft.; **Reach** 5 ft.
Base Atk +2; **Grp** +5

Abilities Str 16, Dex 12, Con 12, Int 11, Wis 9, Cha 7
SA immolate
Feats Alertness, Great Fortitude, Weapon Focus (spear)
Skills Craft (any) +4, Listen +7, Spot +7
Possessions leather armor, 2 spears

Dormancy (Ex) A Thoon thrall spends most of its time in a dormant state. When it is dormant, a Thoon thrall's overdrive healing doesn't function, and the thrall doesn't move at full speed. It appears exactly as it did before a Thoon infiltrator turned it into a Thoon thrall.

As a full-round action, a Thoon thrall can end its dormancy. Throbbing, veinlike growths emerge from its skin, and the thrall's true nature becomes apparent. If a Thoon infiltrator is within 100 feet, a Thoon thrall can end its dormancy as a swift action.

Once a Thoon thrall ends its dormancy, it can't return to a dormant state. Due to overdrive healing, a Thoon thrall cannot survive out of dormancy for long.

Thrall to Thoon Infiltrator (Ex) A Thoon thrall responds to the commands of the nearest Thoon infiltrator as if *dominated*, with no save allowed.

Overdrive Healing (Su) This ability works like fast healing 5, but a thrall can gain hit points beyond its full normal hit points as temporary hit points. A thrall's skin begins to blister and swell when this happens, and the thrall grows visibly larger. Once its temporary hit points equal or exceed its full normal hit points, a Thoon thrall must make a save every round or explode (see below).

Immolate (Su) When a Thoon thrall is fully healed and has temporary hit points equal to or greater than its full normal hit points, it might explode, its body unable to contain the energy within. At the end of its turn, if a Thoon thrall's temporary hit points equal or exceed its full normal hit points, it must succeed on a DC 11 Fortitude save. If it fails, it explodes, dealing 3d6 points of fire damage to all creatures within a 10-foot-radius burst, plus an extra 1d6 points of fire damage for each Thoon infiltrator and additional Thoon thrall within 30 feet (Reflex DC 11 half). The explosion kills the Thoon thrall.

A Thoon thrall can voluntarily fail this save, but it does so only on a direct order from a Thoon infiltrator.

Thoon thralls are the foot soldiers of the secret cabals that the Thoon infiltrators direct. They remain in their humanoid guise until discovered or ordered into battle, then they undergo a final transformation and go out in a blaze of glory.

The Thoon thrall presented here uses a 1st-level human commoner as the base creature. It had the following ability scores before racial modifications: Str 10, Dex 10, Con 10, Int 11, Wis 11, Cha 11.

Strategies and Tactics

Thoon thralls work well in the company of other Thoon thralls and a Thoon infiltrator to direct them. Beyond that, they're straightforward grunts that can take a lot of punishment—especially if they get a round or two of overdrive healing before the battle begins.

The most important strategic element to remember about Thoon thralls is that the Thoon infiltrator that created the thrall needs to carefully consider whether it's worth throwing away a thrall in a particular battle. A Thoon thrall can take its true form only once. After it leaves dormancy, overdrive healing forces it to immolate before long. So, an awakened thrall is always a dead thrall—an expended resource to the Thoon infiltrator.

Ecology

Unlike the transformation into a Thoon infiltrator, which completely remakes the creature, the transformation into a Thoon thrall leaves the creature largely intact. The creature looks the same, behaves the same, and retains its own free will—unless a Thoon infiltrator is around. A Thoon thrall must eat, sleep, and breathe as it did before becoming a Thoon

THOON THRALL LORE

Characters who have ranks in Knowledge (dungeoneering) can learn more about Thoon thralls. When a character makes a successful skill check, the following lore is revealed, including the information from lower DCs. A character who has ranks in Knowledge (nature) can attempt this check, but the DCs increase by 10.

Knowledge (Dungeoneering)

DC	Result
20	This is a Thoon thrall, a member of a secret cabal that reveres mind flayers. When it comes out of dormancy, it grows freakishly large, then explodes.
25	The mind flayers of Thoon control Thoon thralls through human-looking intermediaries called Thoon infiltrators.

thrall. Even reproductive ability is unaffected, although any offspring aren't Thoon thralls.

Environment: A Thoon thrall either continues to live where it did before its transformation or follows a Thoon infiltrator on a dark errand. A few serve the mind flayers of Thoon directly as servants, but the illithids prefer their own thralls to the explosive ones created by Thoon infiltrators.

Typical Physical Characteristics: When in dormancy, Thoon thralls are indistinguishable from what they looked like as humanoids. When they end their dormancy, however, they begin to grow muscle at a freakish rate, gaining 40 to 50 pounds as they reach the point when they might immolate.

Alignment: Thoon thralls are usually lawful evil, but that's because they are puppets to their Thoon infiltrator masters, not because they necessarily behave wickedly when not under such influence.

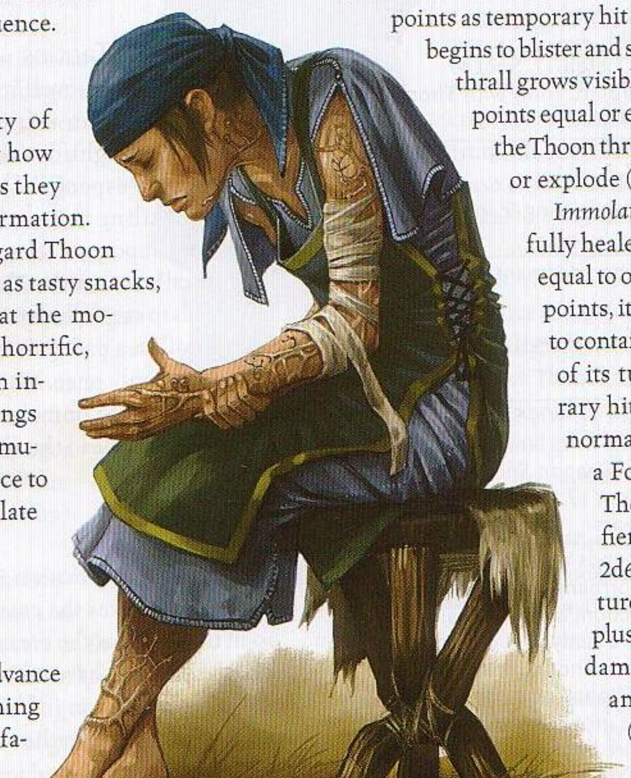
Society

Thoon thralls have no society of their own, but they remember how to function in the communities they lived in before their transformation. The mind flayers of Thoon regard Thoon thralls as beneath contempt or as tasty snacks, depending on their appetite at the moment. Life for Thoon thralls is horrific, since they are forced by Thoon infiltrators to do unspeakable things and undermine their own communities. Many welcome the chance to end their dormancy and immolate themselves.

Thoon Thralls with Class Levels

Thoon thralls can continue to advance in character classes after becoming a thrall. They have the same favored classes as the humanoid they are created from, unless their new alignment precludes advancement in such classes. In this case, treat rogue as the thrall's favored class.

Illus. by E. Widermann



Thoon thrall

CREATING A THOON THRALL

"Thoon thrall" is an acquired template that can be added to any humanoid creature that a Thoon infiltrator could reasonably render helpless for 1 minute (referred to hereafter as the "base creature").

Challenge Rating: Same as the base creature +2.

Type: The base creature's type changes to monstrous humanoid. It does not gain the augmented subtype but retains other subtypes except those from alignment and humanoid race.

Senses: A Thoon thrall gains darkvision out to 60 feet if it doesn't already have better.

Languages: A Thoon thrall can communicate telepathically with any Thoon infiltrator within 100 feet. It also gains the following special quality.

Thrall to Thoon Infiltrator: A Thoon thrall responds to the commands of the nearest Thoon infiltrator as if *dominated*, with no save allowed.

HD: Add two monstrous humanoid Hit Dice. This improvement grants a base attack bonus increase of +2, a +3 bonus on Reflex and Will saves, 2d8 hit points, 2 × (2 + Int modifier) skill points, and feats at the usual rate.

A Thoon thrall also gains the following special quality and special attack.

Overdrive Healing (Su): This ability works like fast healing 5, but the thrall can gain hit points beyond its full normal hit points as temporary hit points. The Thoon thrall's skin begins to blister and swell when this happens, and the thrall grows visibly larger. Once its temporary hit points equal or exceed its full normal hit points, the Thoon thrall must make a save every round or explode (see below).

Immolate (Su): When a Thoon thrall is fully healed and has temporary hit points equal to or greater than its full normal hit points, it might explode, its body unable to contain the energy within. At the end of its turn, if a Thoon thrall's temporary hit points equal or exceed its full normal hit points, it must succeed on a Fortitude save (DC 10 + 1/2 the Thoon thrall's HD + its Con modifier). If it fails, it explodes, dealing 2d6 points of fire damage to all creatures within a 10-foot-radius burst, plus an additional 1d6 points of fire damage for each Thoon infiltrator and Thoon thrall within 30 feet. (It's always near itself, so even a lone Thoon thrall explodes for 3d6 points of fire damage.) Creatures that succeed on a Reflex save (DC 10 + 1/2 the Thoon thrall's HD + its Con modifier) take half damage. The explosion kills the Thoon thrall.

A Thoon thrall can voluntarily fail this save, but it does so only on a direct order from a Thoon infiltrator.

AC: A Thoon thrall is slightly more durable than it was in its previous life. Increase the base creature's natural armor bonus by 1.

Speed: When not dormant, a Thoon thrall's speed increases by 10 feet in whatever mode the creature most often employs (usually land speed).

Abilities: The base creature's ability scores are modified as follows: Str +6, Dex +2, Con +2, Wis –2, Cha –4.

Special Qualities: A Thoon thrall retains all the special qualities of the base creature and gains the following special quality.

Dormancy (Ex): A Thoon thrall spends most of its time in a dormant state. When it is dormant, a Thoon thrall's overdrive healing doesn't function, and the thrall doesn't move at full speed. It appears exactly as it did before a Thoon infiltrator turned it into a Thoon thrall.

As a full-round action, a Thoon thrall can end its dormancy. Throbbing, veinlike growths emerge from its skin, and the thrall's true nature becomes apparent. If a Thoon infiltrator is within 100 feet, then a Thoon thrall can end its dormancy as a swift action.

Once a Thoon thrall ends its dormancy, it can't return to a dormant state. Due to overdrive healing, a Thoon thrall cannot survive out of dormancy for long.

Level Adjustment: —. Because of the total vulnerability to Thoon infiltrator domination and the nature of overdrive healing, Thoon thralls are unsuitable as PCs.

THOON SOLDIER

This biped is covered with armor plates, yet it moves with a sinuous quality. With a liquid, bubbling sound, it extrudes claws and axe-blades from its arms.

THOON SOLDIER CR 8

Always N Medium construct
Init +3; **Senses** darkvision 60 ft., low-light vision; Listen +1, Spot +1
Languages speaks specific Undercommon phrases; understands telepathic commands

AC 20, touch 13, flat-footed 17
(+3 Dex, +7 natural)
hp 75 (10 HD)
Immune construct immunities
Resist fire 10
Fort +3, **Ref** +6, **Will** +4

Speed 30 ft. (6 squares)
Melee 2 arm-axes +14 each (1d8+7/×3)
Space 5 ft.; **Reach** 5 ft.
Base Atk +7; **Grp** +14
Atk Options depends on aspect (see below)
Special Actions aspect of bloody slaughter, aspect of the fiery sun, aspect of the impervious tower, aspect of the ravenous horde, aspect of the death blossom

Abilities Str 25, Dex 16, Con —, Int —, Wis 12, Cha 5
SA aspect of bloody slaughter, aspect of the impervious tower, aspect of the ravenous horde, aspect of the fiery sun, aspect of the death blossom
SQ construct traits
Feats —
Skills Listen +1, Spot +1
Advancement 14 HD (Large); see text

Aspect of Bloody Slaughter (Ex) By expending a swift action and taking 5 points of damage, a Thoon soldier can reconfigure its limbs to deal damage to multiple adjacent foes. When in this aspect, a Thoon soldier can make a Whirlwind Attack (as the feat) with its arm-blades as a full-round action, and it can make attacks of opportunity as if it had the Combat Reflexes feat. A Thoon soldier can have only one aspect active at a time. When adopting this aspect, a Thoon soldier says in Undercommon, "Slaughter for Thoon!"

Aspect of the Fiery Sun (Ex) By expending a swift action and taking 5 points of damage, a Thoon soldier can channel quintessence from its body, creating heat. The Thoon soldier's melee attacks deal an extra 2d6 points of fire damage, and creatures that hit it with a natural weapon or a nonreach melee weapon take 1d6 points of fire damage. A Thoon soldier can have only one aspect active at a time. When adopting this aspect, a Thoon soldier says in Undercommon, "All will burn for Thoon!"

Aspect of the Impervious Tower (Ex) By expending a swift action and taking 5 points of damage, a Thoon soldier can extrude extra armor plates and bolster its magical defenses. When using this aspect, a Thoon soldier gains a +4 resistance bonus on saving throws and a +4 deflection bonus to AC. A Thoon soldier can have only one aspect active at a time. When adopting this aspect, a Thoon soldier says in Undercommon, "Stand and fight! Thoon is Thoon!"

Aspect of the Ravenous Horde (Ex) By expending a swift action and taking 5 points of damage, a Thoon soldier can reconfigure its lower limbs for greater speed and maneuverability. When in this aspect, a Thoon soldier's speed increases to 40 feet, and it can make a melee attack in the middle of its move as if it had the Spring Attack feat. A Thoon soldier can have only one aspect active at a time. When adopting this aspect, a Thoon soldier says in Undercommon, "Walk with Thoon!"

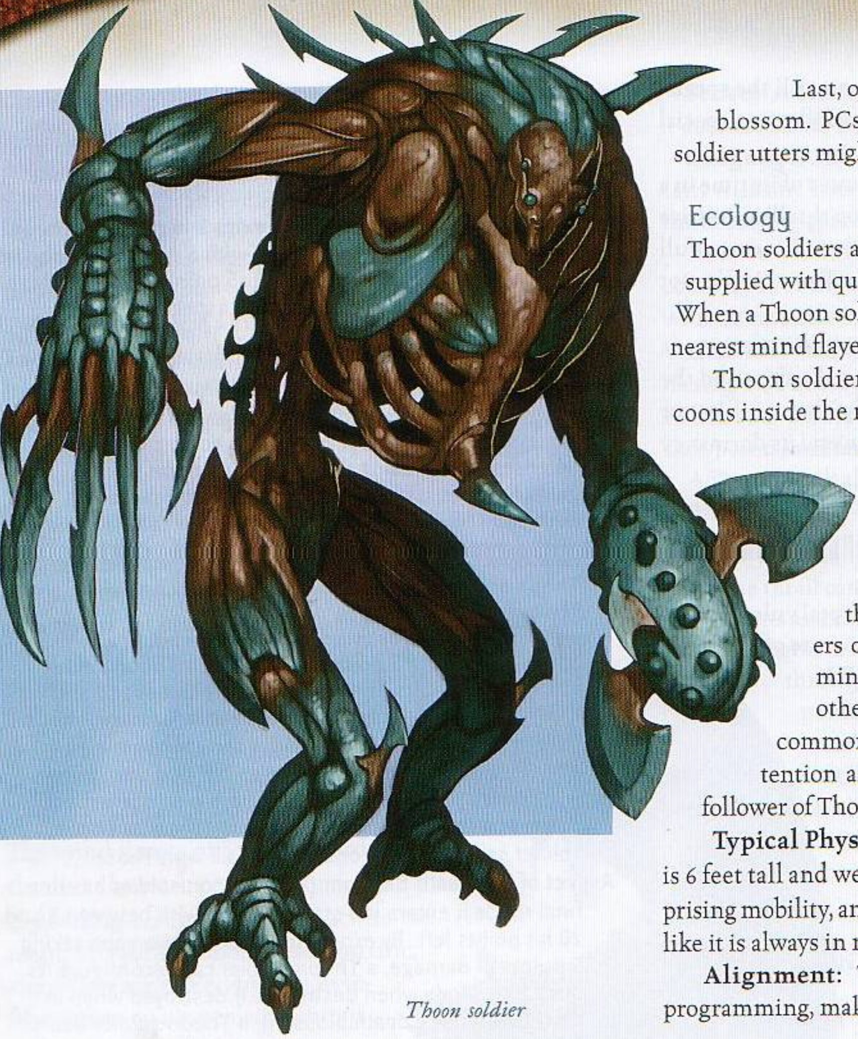
Aspect of the Death Blossom (Ex) A Thoon soldier has one final mode it enters if it starts its turn with between 5 and 20 hit points left. By expending a swift action and taking 5 points of damage, a Thoon soldier can reconfigure its body to explode when destroyed. If destroyed when in the aspect of the death blossom, a Thoon soldier deals 8d6 points of fire damage to all creatures within a 40-foot-radius burst (Reflex DC 15 half). A Thoon soldier can have only one aspect active at any time. When adopting this aspect, a Thoon soldier says in Undercommon, "Death blooms in the name of Thoon! Thoon! Thoon!" A Thoon soldier doesn't change out of the aspect of the death blossom until it's fully healed. The save DC is Constitution-based.

THOON SOLDIER LORE

Characters who have ranks in Knowledge (dungeoneering) can learn more about Thoon soldiers. When a character makes a successful skill check, the following lore is revealed, including the information from lower DCs. A character who has ranks in Knowledge (arcana) can attempt this check, but the DCs increase by 10.

Knowledge (Dungeoneering)

DC	Result
23	This is a Thoon soldier, a construct built by mind flayers of Thoon to act as an infantry soldier.
28	A Thoon soldier can change between a number of aspects that enhance its body, changing speed, defense, or combat prowess.
33	When badly damaged, a Thoon soldier will enter an "aspect of the death blossom" and will explode if destroyed. It remains in that mode until the mind flayers repair it.



Thoon soldier

Illus. by W. Maby

Thoon soldiers are constructs made in the quintessence-cocoons of the nautiloid vessel that the mind flayers of Thoon call home.

Strategies and Tactics

Thoon soldiers are straightforward melee combatants, but because they can change aspects, they can feel like different monsters even when you throw multiple Thoon soldiers at the PCs.

A Thoon soldier instinctively assesses the tactical situation at the beginning of each turn, choosing an appropriate aspect. In the first round, this is often the aspect that provides the most maneuverability—aspect of the ravenous horde.

Thoon soldiers understand aspect changes on a round-by-round basis, but unless directed by someone else, they don't "think ahead" with regard to aspects. At the beginning of its turn, a Thoon soldier simply picks whichever aspect is useful at moment. If opponents gang up on it, it switches to aspect of the fiery sun (against two foes) or aspect of bloody slaughter (against three or more). A Thoon soldier uses aspect of the impervious tower when it senses that spells might deal the most damage during a particular round.

Last, of course, comes the aspect of the death blossom. PCs who ignore the ominous phrase the soldier utters might not live to regret their choice.

Ecology

Thoon soldiers are formed within cocoons that must be supplied with quintessence by the mind flayers of Thoon. When a Thoon soldier emerges from a cocoon, it finds the nearest mind flayer and awaits orders.

Thoon soldiers are programmed to return to the cocoons inside the nautiloid vessel if they enter the aspect of the death blossom but survive the battle. Quintessence from the vessel's stores repairs them at a rate of 1 hit point per day.

Environment: Thoon soldiers form the best security patrols that the mind flayers of Thoon have, so they're as common as mind flayers within the nautiloid vessel (or other base for Thoon followers). They're less common outside, because they attract undue attention and require supervision from a sentient follower of Thoon.

Typical Physical Characteristics: A Thoon soldier is 6 feet tall and weighs 300 pounds. Its armor allows it surprising mobility, and the mutability of its form makes it look like it is always in motion.

Alignment: Thoon soldiers strictly follow their programming, making them neutral.

Advanced Thoon Soldiers

The cocoons do not advance Thoon soldiers on a Hit-Die-by-Hit-Die basis. Occasionally, a Large 14 HD Thoon soldier spontaneously emerges from a cocoon. Such a Thoon soldier is a CR 10 monster.

MADCRAFTER OF THOON

This immense, sluglike creature has a mane of canisters, each containing a glowing, green fluid. The front of its body seems like it is all mouth—a maw dripping with spittle.

MADCRAFTER OF THOON CR 10

Usually NE Huge aberration
Init +4; **Senses** darkvision 60 ft.; Listen +17, Spot +17
Languages Undercommon; telepathy 100 ft.

AC 20, touch 8, flat-footed 20
(–2 size, +12 natural)
hp 125 (10 HD); fast healing 5
Immune acid
Fort +11, **Ref** +3, **Will** +9

Speed 20 ft. (4 squares)
Melee bite +16 (2d8+15 plus 4d6 acid)
Space 15 ft.; **Reach** 10 ft.
Base Atk +7; **Grp** +25
Special Actions launch spawn, *mind blast*
Spell-Like Abilities (CL 10th):
At will—*detect magic*

Abilities Str 30, Dex 10, Con 26, Int 19, Wis 15, Cha 13
SA launch spawn, *mind blast*, spell-like abilities
Feats Alertness, Improved Initiative, Sense Quintessence*, Weapon Focus (bite)
* New feat; see sidebar, page 110.
Skills Concentration +21, Intimidate +14, Knowledge (arcana) +17, Knowledge (the planes) +17, Listen +17, Spot +17, Survival +2 (+4 on other planes)
Advancement unknown; see Advanced Madcrafters of Thoon

Launch Spawn (Su) A madcrafter of Thoon usually takes a full day to give birth to a stormcloud of Thoon or a scyther of Thoon. When threatened, however, it can create constructs far more rapidly, then expel them in globules of caustic spittle. Once per round, as a swift action, a madcrafter of Thoon can spit a stormcloud of Thoon or a scyther of Thoon into any unoccupied square within 60 feet.

The caustic birthing fluid that surrounds the new construct covers the square the construct lands in and all adjacent squares. Creatures in those squares take 6d6 points of acid damage (Reflex DC 23 half). For 1 minute afterward, any creature that steps in a square covered by acid takes 3d6 points of acid damage.

A typical madcrafter of Thoon has enough stored quintessence to safely use its launch spawn ability twice per day. If it uses launch spawn a third time, it loses its fast healing ability for the rest of the day. The fourth and subsequent times it uses launch spawn, it takes 20 points of damage.

Mind Blast (Sp) 60-foot cone, stuns for 3d4 rounds (Will DC 15 negates). Unlike its mind flayer cousins, a madcrafter of Thoon can use *mind blast* only three times per day.

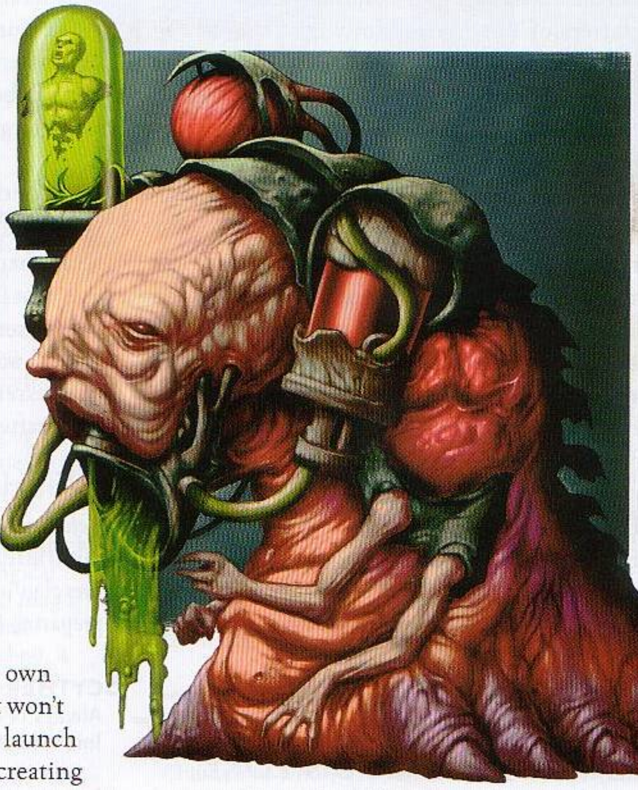
A madcrafter of Thoon is a living factory for some of the quintessence-fueled constructs employed by the mind flayers of Thoon.

Strategies and Tactics

Because a madcrafter of Thoon can create its own allies, it's a good choice for a lone monster—but it won't be alone for long. The swift action required to launch spawn doesn't mean that the madcrafter is truly creating new constructs in the blink of an eye. It instead represents how the madcrafter can do other tasks during most of the birthing process.

In combat, a madcrafter of Thoon is strongest if it can begin at range, launching two spawn in the first 2 rounds to put some defenders between itself and its foes. If it can damage those adversaries with acid from the birthing fluid, all the better. Then, it assesses the tactical situation, using launch spawn even more if opponents are overcoming or outmaneuvering its other spawn and if it can afford to take the damage. It makes melee attacks if it must, but it prefers to let its constructs fight while it uses *mind blast*.

A madcrafter of Thoon's biggest weakness is its slow speed. It is acutely aware that it can't outrun opponents or flee determined pursuit, so it retreats through narrow passages that it can cover with acid.



Madcrafter of Thoon

Illus. by D. Allsop

DESIGNING MADCRAFTER ENCOUNTERS

Because the madcrafter of Thoon is essentially a monster that spawns other monsters, you should be aware of a few special considerations when planning a madcrafter of Thoon encounter.

The first consideration: Madcrafters handle high-level PCs poorly because they depend on CR 6 monsters to do much of their dirty work. The CR 10 madcrafter is indeed a suitable challenge for four 10th-level PCs. But two CR 10 madcrafters don't challenge four 12th-level PCs in the same way, because the CR 6 scythers of Thoon just can't hurt the PCs. Nor would four CR 10 madcrafters challenge a 14th-level group. You can, however, mix a single madcrafter with other monsters to get the encounter level you desire.

The second consideration is your own fun at the table. You can use the madcrafter of Thoon to spawn construct after construct, and if you're tactically minded, you can give the PCs fits with this monster. You're the one responsible for tracking all those monsters, and nobody at the gaming table is having any fun when it takes you 10 minutes to move your army of constructs. Think carefully about how many monsters you want to be running at a time.

Ecology

Looking at them, it's difficult to believe that the madcrafters of Thoon were once mind flayers. Contact with the Far Realm and Thoon has twisted them into the immense, sluglike creatures they are today.

A madcrafter of Thoon subsists entirely on quintessence. Because madcrafters of Thoon are slow and vulnerable out in the world, other creatures gather quintessence for them.

Though the madcrafters of Thoon are no longer mind flayers, they have a similar life cycle. The asexual madcrafters give birth to thousands of tadpoles in a spawning pool deep within the nautiloid vessel (not the same pool the Thoon elder brain lives in). The tadpoles feast on each other in a frenzy of cannibalism punctuated by long periods of group torpor. Eventually, one massive madcrafter of Thoon, grown fat from consuming its siblings, slithers from the spawning pool and immediately demands its first taste of quintessence.

The madcrafters of Thoon need only quintessence to survive from that point forward, but they have a vestigial appetite for sentient brains. They don't derive nutrition from brains, but a sentient brain sends a madcrafter of Thoon into fits of ecstasy. Thoon elder brains and Thoon disciples use fresh brains as rewards to keep their construct-producing madcrafters in line.

Environment: A creature that churns out constructs is valuable, so the mind flayers of Thoon usually keep the madcrafters safe in their main base. If an outpost beyond the nautiloid vessel is safe, the mind flayers might try to move a madcrafter of Thoon there, because it's useful to have a construct factory and quintessence repository on site. Still, doing so is tricky, because the madcrafters are slow and attract a lot of attention.

Typical Physical Characteristics: A madcrafter of Thoon is almost 20 feet long and weighs about ten tons. Aside from forelimbs and a head, a madcrafter's anatomy is confusing and alien. Its most prominent feature is its oozing, gaping mouth.

MADCRAFTER OF THOON LORE

Characters who have ranks in Knowledge (dungeoneering) can learn more about madcrafters of Thoon. When a character makes a successful skill check, the following lore is revealed, including the information from lower DCs.

Knowledge (Dungeoneering)

DC	Result
25	This is a madcrafter of Thoon, a sluglike aberration that can vomit out constructs.
30	Madcrafters of Thoon used to be mind flayers, but they were twisted by contact with the Far Realm. They retain some of the mind flayers' mental powers.
35	Madcrafters of Thoon are fueled by a mysterious substance called quintessence, which the mind flayers of Thoon gather for them.

Alignment: Madcrafters of Thoon are neutral evil, but with a twist. They're more lawful when given a regular diet of quintessence and more chaotic when denied quintessence or given too many brains to eat.

Society

Alone among the mind flayers of Thoon, the madcrafters of Thoon actually consume quintessence. The other followers of Thoon gather it because Thoon directs them to, and they covet it for the power it promises. The madcrafters, however, have a direct connection to quintessence and a craving for it that sometimes overwhelms their reason. Consequently, the mind flayers keep the madcrafters well fed—a starving madcrafter lashes out at everyone and does almost anything to attain more quintessence.

Quintessence isn't the madcrafters' only dependency. They are addicted to the pleasure of eating sentient brains. Even a madcrafter that feeds on a matrix of quintessence starts to feel hunger pangs soon afterward, never feeling sated by quintessence consumption. If given a sentient brain, however, it might be lost in pleasure for hours, its hunger for quintessence forgotten.

Advanced Madcrafters of Thoon

The mind flayers of Thoon don't have any madcrafters with more than 10 Hit Dice—yet. Some Thoon disciples theorize that feeding a madcrafter of Thoon a large amount of quintessence might cause it to grow, perhaps exponentially. The Thoon elder brain is considering more aggressive quintessence-gathering to experiment with overfeeding a madcrafter of Thoon.

SCYTHER OF THOON

Before you is a silvery automaton with four arms, perfectly constructed to wield the two wicked-looking scythes it carries. It eyes glow as they cast forth beams of illumination. It crouches as preparing to attack.

SCYTHER OF THOON **CR 6**

Always N Medium construct
Init +2; **Senses** darkvision 60 ft., illumination, low-light vision; Listen +1, Spot +1
Languages understands telepathic commands

AC 18, touch 12, flat-footed 16
(+2 Dex, +6 natural)
hp 69 (9 HD); natural healing
Immune acid, construct immunities
Resist electricity 10
Fort +3, **Ref** +5, **Will** +4

Speed 30 ft. (6 squares)
Melee 2 mwk scythes +11 each (2d4+6/×4)
Ranged *searing light* +8 touch (damage varies; see below)
Space 5 ft.; **Reach** 5 ft.
Base Atk +6; **Grp** +10
Special Actions dispelling touch

Abilities Str 18, Dex 14, Con —, Int —, Wis 13, Cha 5
SA dispelling touch, *searing light*
SQ construct traits

Feats —
Skills Listen +1, Spot +1
Advancement unknown; see Advanced Scythers of Thoon
Possessions 2 masterwork scythes

Illumination As long as at least two other scythers of Thoon are within 30 feet, the glowing eyes of a scyther shed light in a 60-foot cone and provide shadowy illumination in a 120-foot cone. A scyther of Thoon can close its eyes to douse the illumination, but doing so leaves it blind.

A scyther of Thoon that has only one other scyther within range still has glowing eyes, but those eyes provide only a 20-foot radius of bright illumination and a 40-foot radius of shadowy illumination. A scyther of Thoon by itself has faintly glowing eyes that provide shadowy illumination in a 5-foot radius.

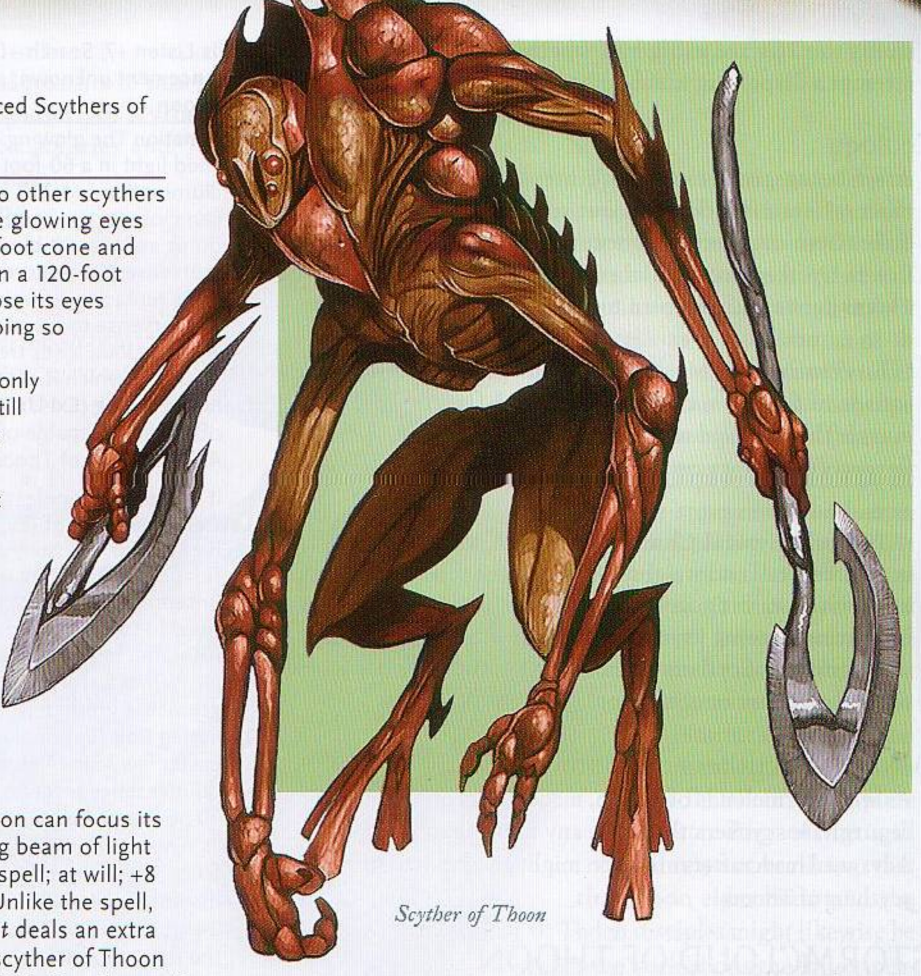
Natural Healing (Ex) A scyther of Thoon is capable of natural healing, albeit very slowly. A scyther of Thoon heals 1 hit point for every 8 hours it remains motionless.

Searing Light (Sp) A scyther of Thoon can focus its glowing eyes to emit a damaging beam of light that functions as a *searing light* spell; at will; +8 ranged touch; caster level 6th. Unlike the spell, a scyther of Thoon's *searing light* deals an extra 1d8 points of damage for each scyther of Thoon within 30 feet (maximum 5d8), including the scyther emitting the *searing light*.

After one scyther of Thoon has used *searing light*, the glowing eyes of any others within 30 feet dim briefly, and none of those creatures can use *searing light* during the same round.

Dispelling Touch (Su) With a successful melee touch attack, a scyther of Thoon can wipe away spells and magical effects. This ability functions as a targeted *dispel magic* spell (caster level 6th). Against each ongoing spell currently in effect on the object or creature touched, a scyther makes a dispel check at +6 against a DC of 11 + the spell's caster level.

Each time a scyther of Thoon uses dispelling touch, it takes 10 points of damage.



Scyther of Thoon

Illus. by W. Mahy

Scythers of Thoon are constructs vomited forth by mad-crafters of Thoon. They serve as foot soldiers to advance the cause of Thoon.

Strategies and Tactics

Scythers of Thoon are best used in groups with other scythers, when they're strongest and most interesting.

The most common tactic for a group of scythers is to have all but one rush into melee, while the remaining scyther uses *searing light* against a target that is either about to drop or can't be attacked by other scythers in melee.

Without a sentient mind to guide them, scythers of Thoon use their dispelling touch only if a magical effect is preventing them from damaging their target, and it must be something obvious such as a magical wall or a visible defensive spell. With a mind flayer or even a stormcloud of Thoon to guide them, scythers of Thoon can put dispelling touch to better tactical use, ending beneficial spells, grounding foes who use *fly* spells, and otherwise wreaking havoc with carefully built plans. Thoon disciples in particular have enough ranks in Spellcraft to know what

SCYTHER OF THOON LORE

Characters who have ranks in Knowledge (dungeoneering) can learn more about scythers of Thoon. When a character makes a successful skill check, the following lore is revealed, including the information from lower DCs. A character who has ranks in Knowledge (arcana) can attempt this check, but the DCs increase by 10.

Knowledge (Dungeoneering)

DC	Result
21	This is a scyther of Thoon, a foot soldier construct invented by the mind flayers of Thoon.
26	Scythers of Thoon can shoot fiery beams of light from their eyes. These beams are weaker if a scyther is not near other scythers of Thoon.
31	Scythers of Thoon can neutralize magic spells with a touch. They are immune to acid and resistant to electricity, and they heal without requiring repair.

spells the PCs are using and whether it's worthwhile to attempt a dispelling touch.

Ecology

After being given enough quintessence and metal ore, madcrafters of Thoon spit out scythers that then await orders from any telepathic creature of Thoon (usually a mind flayer). Unlike Thoon hulks and Thoon soldiers, scythers of Thoon don't need to return to their "parent" to heal—they do so naturally.

Environment: Most scythers of Thoon are kept in squads of four to six within the mind flayers' base, but outside the nautiloid vessel. Scythers are plentiful, so mind flayers often order a pair of scythers to follow them around as menial servants.

Typical Physical Characteristics: A scyther of Thoon is 5-1/2 feet tall and weighs 250 pounds. It relaxes its lower arms when walking, giving it a lumbering gait, but it uses both arms to swing its scythes in combat.

Alignment: Scythers of Thoon are neutral, with behavior solely dependent on their programming and orders.

Advanced Scythers of Thoon

As with stormclouds of Thoon, madcrafters of Thoon don't regurgitate scythers that have any more than 8 Hit Dice. Advanced madcrafters of Thoon might give birth to stronger scythers of Thoon.

STORMCLOUD OF THOON

This floating metal egg has an array of tentacles hanging from its underside, many of which have sharp blades or grasping claws at the end. Eyelike spots near the front glow with malign intelligence.

Stormcloud of Thoon CR 5

Usually NE Medium construct
Init +2; **Senses** darkvision 60 ft., illumination, low-light vision, tremorsense 60 ft. (see below); Listen +7, Spot +7
Languages Undercommon; telepathy 100 ft.

AC 17, touch 12, flat-footed 15
(+2 Dex, +5 natural)
hp 64 (8 HD); natural healing
Immune acid, construct immunities
Fort +2, **Ref** +8, **Will** +9

Speed 30 ft. (6 squares), fly 10 ft. (perfect), swim 20 ft.; levitative movement
Melee 4 tentacles +8 each (1d4+1)
Space 5 ft.; **Reach** 5 ft.
Base Atk +6; **Grp** +7
Atk Options Combat Reflexes
Special Actions *lightning bolt* (5d6; DC 12; see below)
Spell-Like Abilities (CL 5th):
At will—*detect magic*
3/day—*shield*

Abilities Str 13, Dex 14, Con —, Int 5, Wis 16, Cha 9
SA *lightning bolt*, spell-like abilities
SQ construct traits
Feats Combat Reflexes, Sense Quintessence*, Weapon Focus (tentacle)
* New feat; see sidebar, page 110.
Skills Listen +7, Search +0, Spot +7, Swim +9
Advancement unknown; see Advanced Stormclouds of Thoon

Illumination The glowing eyes of a stormcloud of Thoon shed light in a 60-foot cone and provide shadowy illumination in a 120-foot cone. A stormcloud of Thoon can close its eyes and eliminate the illumination, but doing so leaves it blind.

Tremorsense (Ex) A stormcloud of Thoon must bury one of its tentacles a few inches under the ground for its tremorsense to function. Doing so is a swift action, but a stormcloud loses tremorsense if it moves out of the square in which it set the tentacle.

Natural Healing (Ex) Unlike most constructs, a stormcloud of Thoon is capable of natural healing, albeit very slowly. A stormcloud of Thoon heals 1 hit point for every 8 hours it remains motionless.

Levitative Movement (Ex) Even when the creature uses its land speed, the body of a stormcloud of Thoon is actually floating about 5 feet off the ground, propelled by an unseen force. A stormcloud of Thoon's tentacles don't need to touch the ground when moving, and the creature is unaffected by difficult or hazardous terrain.

When a stormcloud of Thoon flies more than 5 feet above the ground, its speed slows dramatically.

Lightning Bolt (Sp) As the *lightning bolt* spell; at will; DC 12, caster level 5th. A stormcloud of Thoon must tap into its quintessence reserves to use this ability, causing it to take 10 points of damage whenever it does so.

Skills A stormcloud of Thoon has a +8 racial bonus on any Swim check to perform some special action or avoid a hazard. The creature can always choose to take 10 on a Swim check, even if distracted or endangered. It can use the run action when swimming, provided it swims in a straight line.

Stormclouds of Thoon, constructs birthed by madcrafters of Thoon, are floating sentinels that are adept at locating quintessence sources and spotting the enemies of the mind flayers of Thoon.

STORMCLOUD OF THOON LORE

Characters who have ranks in Knowledge (dungeoneering) can learn more about stormclouds of Thoon. When a character makes a successful skill check, the following lore is revealed, including the information from lower DCs. A character who has ranks in Knowledge (arcana) can attempt this check, but the DCs increase by 10.

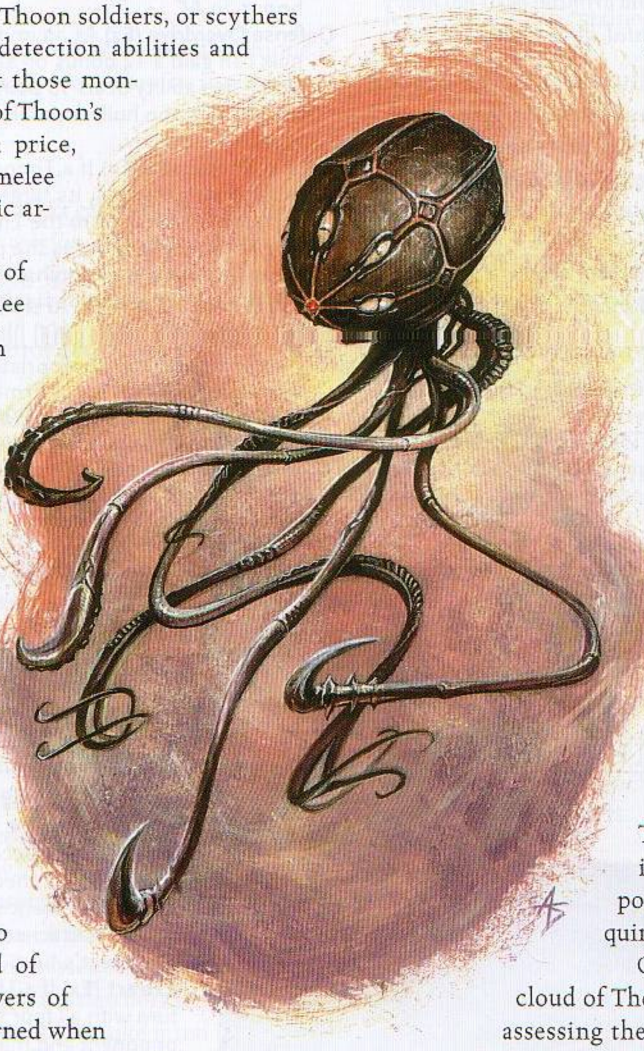
Knowledge (Dungeoneering)

DC	Result
20	This egg-shaped construct is a stormcloud of Thoon. It is a creation of the mind flayers.
25	A sect called the mind flayers of Thoon uses stormclouds of Thoon to scout for brains and gather a substance called quintessence. The construct is a capable melee combatant, and it can emit a lightning bolt seemingly at will.
30	A stormcloud of Thoon is immune to acid. It has the ability to heal naturally, unlike most constructs. This healing happens slowly, however.

Strategies and Tactics

A stormcloud of Thoon is a useful creature to mix into a group of shadow flayers, Thoon soldiers, or scythers of Thoon. It adds some detection abilities and a ranged area attack that those monsters lack. A stormcloud of Thoon's *lightning bolt* comes at a price, however, so it's better as a melee combatant than as a magic artillery piece.

In battle, a stormcloud of Thoon floats near the melee combatants, attacking with its tentacles but remaining alert for foes who group in clusters or lines. If it can hit three or more opponents with a *lightning bolt*, it moves into position to do so.



Stormcloud of Thoon

Illus. by A. Stokes

Ecology

Stormclouds of Thoon are created by madcrafters of Thoon. Stormclouds range farther from the mind flayer base than other constructs. It's easy for a madcrafter of Thoon to regurgitate a stormcloud of Thoon, so the mind flayers of Thoon aren't overly concerned when enemies destroy a stormcloud. The illithids don't send their stormclouds of Thoon too far afield simply because the ovoid constructs can reveal the mind flayers' presence.

Environment: Stormclouds of Thoon can travel with ease over most kinds of terrain. Even when technically using their land speed or swimming, they're actually floating, so underwater depths, muck-filled swamps, and difficult terrain pose no barrier to their travels.

Typical Physical Characteristics: A stormcloud of Thoon floats about 4 feet above the ground. Its tentacles are about 6 feet long on average, and it weighs about 100 pounds. Eyelike structures form a radial pattern on the front of its egg-shaped head. The tentacles that protrude in a jumble from the bottom of a stormcloud's head serve a variety of functions.

Alignment: Stormclouds of Thoon are neutral evil, but that alignment represents more their casual willingness to perform evil deeds for their masters than an innate, supernatural evil. Stormclouds have only a rudimentary sense of right and wrong—they just do what they're told and won't go out of their way to help or harm others unless directed to do so.

Society

Unlike most constructs, stormclouds of Thoon are fully sentient. Even so, they're dullards in a community of evil geniuses, so they rarely put their intellects to much use.

Socially, a stormcloud of Thoon is a very passive creature. Among the mind flayers of Thoon, everyone else is smarter than a stormcloud and capable of ordering it around. As a result, stormclouds of Thoon usually don't communicate or interact beyond what's required to accomplish their assigned tasks.

Stormclouds of Thoon blame their limited intellect for their incomplete understanding of the will of Thoon, not realizing that the Thoon elder brain and the Thoon disciples might likewise be in the dark about the larger purpose behind Thoon veneration and quintessence-gathering.

Out in the field, however, a stormcloud of Thoon can put its sentience to use, assessing the risks in each encounter before rushing headlong into battle. Mind flayers often put stormclouds of Thoon in charge of scythers of Thoon or even Thoon soldiers. If something unusual happens, a stormcloud tries to think of the best response rather than mindlessly executing programming.

Advanced Stormclouds of Thoon

Madcrafters of Thoon don't create stormclouds of Thoon that have any more than 8 Hit Dice. No stormcloud of Thoon has gained Hit Dice, but the mind flayers are waiting for stronger versions of the construct to evolve.

Some mind flayers believe that stronger madcrafters of Thoon might create stronger stormclouds of Thoon and scythers of Thoon, so the secret to an advanced stormcloud is to create an advanced madcrafter. Other illithids think that since stormclouds of Thoon are actually sentient, it might be worthwhile to teach them skills (which you can model with class levels in classes such as fighter and rogue). Thoon disciples are awaiting the guidance of Thoon on this matter.

THOON HULK

This amalgamation of rubbery flesh and artificial parts has heavy axelike blades instead of hands and twisted, slimy tentacles covering the lower half of its face.

THOON HULK CR 13

Always NE Large construct
Init +1; **Senses** darkvision 60 ft., low-light vision; Listen +4, Spot +4
Languages understands telepathic commands

AC 26, touch 14, flat-footed 25; deflection shield (–1 size, +1 Dex, +4 deflection, +12 natural)
hp 112 (15 HD)
Immune construct immunities
Resist acid 20, cold 20, electricity 20, fire 20, sonic 20
Fort +5, **Ref** +6, **Will** +9; defense overdrive

Speed 40 ft. (8 squares)
Melee 2 arm-axes +18 each (1d12+8) and 4 tentacles +13 each (1d6+4)
Space 10 ft.; **Reach** 10 ft.
Base Atk +11; **Grp** +23
Atk Options critical knockback, improved grab
Special Actions attack overdrive, extract

Abilities Str 27, Dex 13, Con —, Int —, Wis 18, Cha 10
SA attack overdrive, defense overdrive, extract
Feats —
Skills Listen +4, Spot +4
Advancement 16–20 HD (Large); 21 HD (Huge); see text

Deflection Shield (Su) A Thoon hulk has a force screen around it at all times, granting it a +4 deflection bonus to AC.

Defense Overdrive (Ex) As an immediate action, a Thoon hulk can gain a +2 bonus on saving throws for 1 round. Using this ability deals 10 points of damage to the Thoon hulk. If a Thoon hulk uses this ability, its attack overdrive ends immediately.

Critical Knockback (Ex) If a Thoon hulk threatens a critical hit with its arm-axes, its target flies back 10 feet in a straight line away from the Thoon hulk, landing prone. The Thoon hulk chooses the path, but that path must be away from the Thoon hulk in as direct a path as possible. Intervening obstacles shorten or prevent the knockback. The Thoon hulk still rolls to confirm the threat, dealing appropriate damage depending on whether the threat is confirmed.

Attack Overdrive (Ex) As a swift action, a Thoon hulk can gain a +2 bonus on attack rolls and damage rolls for 1 round. Using this ability deals 10 points of damage to the Thoon hulk. If a Thoon hulk uses this ability, its defense overdrive ends immediately.

Improved Grab (Ex) To use this ability, a Thoon hulk must hit a creature of up to Huge size with a tentacle attack. It can then attempt to start a grapple as a free action without provoking attacks of opportunity.

If it wins the grapple check, it establishes a hold and attaches a tentacle to the opponent's head. A Thoon hulk can grab a Gargantuan or larger creature, but only if it can somehow reach the foe's head. If a Thoon hulk begins its turn with at least one tentacle attached, it can try to attach its remaining tentacles with a single grapple check. The opponent can escape with a single successful grapple check or an Escape Artist check, but the Thoon hulk gets a +2 circumstance bonus for every tentacle that was attached at the beginning of the opponent's turn.

Extract (Ex) If a Thoon hulk begins its turn with all four tentacles attached to its opponent and makes a successful grapple check, it extracts that opponent's brain, instantly killing that creature. Constructs, elementals, oozes, plants, and undead are immune.

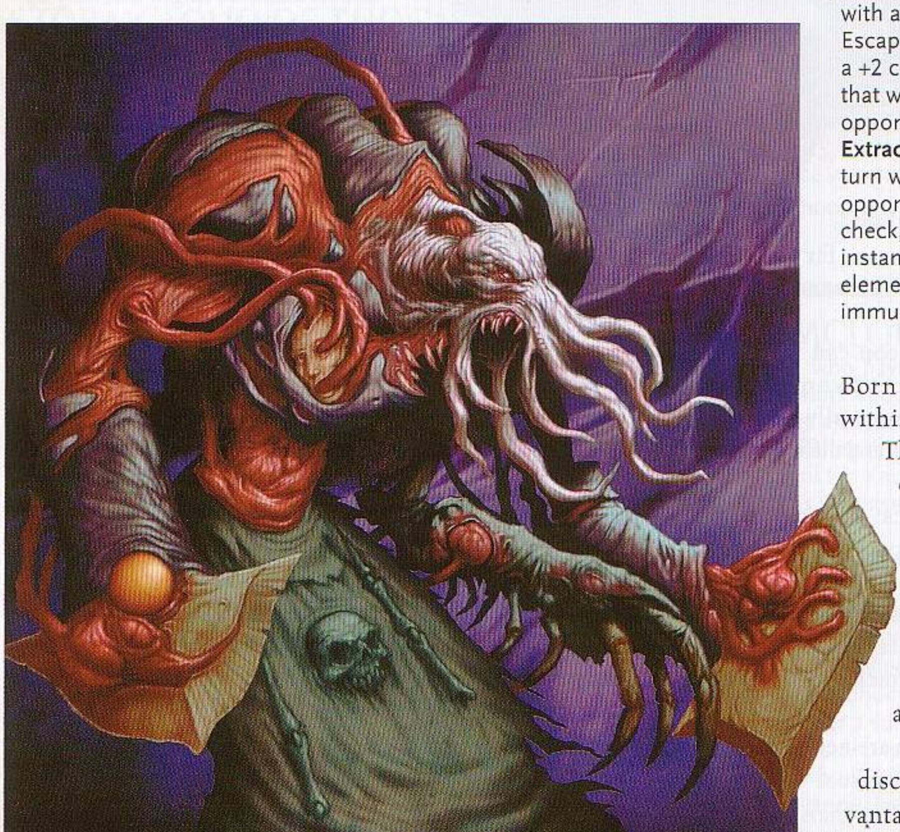
Born of Thoon-inspired fleshcrafting within the mind flayers' nautiloid vessel, Thoon hulks are pitiless brutes that obey their illithid masters' telepathic commands.

Strategies and Tactics

The Thoon hulk is a brute that makes it a good complement to mind flayers. Thoon hulks make up the vanguard of a mind flayer assault.

Mind flayers (including Thoon disciples and shadow flayers) also take advantage of the Thoon hulks' immunity to stunning. Thoon hulks can stand wherever they want and not worry about whether

Illus. by D. Allsop



Thoon hulk

they're getting in the way of a mind flayer's *mind blast*. This makes them effective defenders to shield their mind flayer masters.

In melee combat, a Thoon hulk's favorite technique is to grapple with tentacles and extract brains in time-honored mind flayer fashion.

Ecology

As constructs, Thoon hulks don't eat, sleep, or breathe. But unlike more mechanical creations, Thoon hulks have an innate desire to keep moving. This trait makes them poor guards for lengthy assignments in enclosed spaces, although they do well when given patrol duty along a path at least a few hundred yards long.

Unlike mind flayers, Thoon hulks can't derive sustenance from the brains they extract. They take brains back to the nautiloid vessel if they contain quintessence, or give them to the nearest mind flayer if ordered to do so.

A Thoon hulk emerges from its cocoon with three arms. Two have axelike blades attached to them, and the third is clawed. Thoon hulks don't use their clawed hands in combat, although they can pick up items, open doors, and manipulate objects with them.

Environment: Cocoonlike structures within the nautiloid's inner chambers create Thoon hulks from quintessence, carefully crafted metal parts, and vivisected bodies of mind flayers that the Thoon elder brain found unworthy.

Damaged Thoon hulks are returned to the cocoons, where they heal 1 hit point per day.

Typical Physical Characteristics: A Thoon hulk is 10 feet tall, but it looks shorter because it is usually hunched over. It weighs 1,000 pounds, and its masses of bulging muscle and deadly arm-axes clearly set it apart from normal mind flayers. Bits and pieces of a Thoon hulk look like mind flayer flesh, but metal components are a major part of its anatomy.

THOON HULK LORE

Characters who have ranks in Knowledge (dungeoneering) can learn more about Thoon hulks. When a character makes a successful skill check, the following lore is revealed, including the information from lower DCs. A character who has ranks in Knowledge (arcana) can attempt this check, but the DCs increase by 10.

Knowledge (Dungeoneering)

DC	Result
28	This is a Thoon hulk, a construct built as a mindless automaton by the mind flayers of Thoon. Like a mind flayer, it can extract brains.
33	Thoon hulks can enter an overdrive state that makes them tougher, but doing so damages their internal processes.
38	Mind flayers birth Thoon hulks in cocoon structures that also heal the hulks. Their amalgamated bodies are highly resistant to all forms of energy.

Alignment: Without wills of their own, Thoon hulks are never lawful or chaotic. Their creation and the deeds they do leave them forever stained with evil.

Advanced Thoon Hulks

A undamaged Thoon hulk sometimes emerges from the cocoon slightly tougher than before (with extra Hit Dice). If a Thoon hulk that has 20 Hit Dice is placed in a cocoon, it emerges a week later as a Huge Thoon hulk with 21 Hit Dice.

THOON ELDER BRAIN

Floating in the air is a purple, bulbous mass that looks like a giant brain with trailing tentacles. You sense its telepathic power as an oily wave washes across your consciousness.

THOON ELDER BRAIN CR 15

Usually NE Large aberration
Init +6, dual action; **Senses** darkvision 60 ft.; Listen +6, Spot +6
Languages Undercommon; telepathy 1 mile

AC 26, touch 11, flat-footed 24 (–1 size, +2 Dex, +15 natural)
hp 174 (12 HD); fast healing 10
SR 26
Immune acid, fear
Fort +14, **Ref** +6, **Will** +14

Speed 10 feet (2 squares), fly 20 ft. (perfect), swim 30 ft.
Melee 8 tentacles +17 each (1d6+8 plus 2d6 acid)
Space 10 ft.; **Reach** 10 ft.
Base Atk +9; **Grp** +21
Atk Options Combat Reflexes, acid burn
Special Actions confusion sphere, overmind blast
Spell-Like Abilities (CL 15th):
At will—*charm monster* (DC 20), *detect magic, detect thoughts* (DC 18), *mage armor, plane shift, suggestion* (DC 19).
3/day—*dominate monster* (DC 25)

Abilities Str 26, Dex 14, Con 30, Int 25, Wis 23, Cha 23
SA acid burn, confusion sphere, dual action, overmind blast, spell-like abilities
Feats Ability Focus (confusion sphere), Combat Reflexes, Improved Initiative, Sense Quintessence*, Weapon Focus (tentacle)
* New feat; see sidebar, page 110.
Skills Bluff +21, Concentration +25, Diplomacy +25, Intimidate +23, Knowledge (arcana) +22, Knowledge (religion) +22, Knowledge (the planes) +22, Listen +6, Sense Motive +21, Spellcraft +24, Spot +6
Advancement 13–19 HD (Large); 20–36 HD (Huge)

Dual Action (Ex) A Thoon elder brain is a creature made up of multiple minds, all touched by the unreality of the Far Realm. Make two initiative checks for the creature. The higher result represents a mental action turn, and the lower result is used for a physical action turn. This means a Thoon elder brain can do more in a single round than most creatures. For example, it could perform an overmind blast (a purely mental action) on initiative count 17, then move and make a tentacle attack (a physical action) on initiative count 12. These initiative counts can change if a Thoon elder brain readies an action or delays to let its other half go first.

Acid Burn (Ex) The acid delivered by a Thoon elder brain's tentacles continues to burn in the round after the Thoon elder brain hits. At the beginning of each of a Thoon elder brain's physical action turns, the acid deals 4d6 points of acid damage to any creature the Thoon elder brain hit with a tentacle attack during the previous round. The damage is always 4d6 points, regardless of how many times the Thoon elder brain hit the creature.

Confusion Sphere (Su) A Thoon elder brain can scramble the thoughts of nearby creatures. This ability functions like a *confusion* spell (CL 15th, Will DC 22 negates), except that all creatures (except for creatures of Thoon) within a 10-foot radius centered on the Thoon elder brain are subject to the effect. The effect lasts 15 rounds, but it cannot end for an affected creature when that creature is still within 10 feet of the Thoon elder brain. At the beginning of each affected creature's turn, roll on the table below.

d%	Effect
01–10	Attack the Thoon elder brain with melee or ranged weapons, or close with the elder brain if attack isn't possible.
11–20	Act normally.
21–50	Do nothing but mutter "Thoon . . . Thoon . . ."
51–70	Flee from the Thoon elder brain at top speed.
71–100	Attack nearest creature.

Overmind Blast (Su) A Thoon elder brain can project the horror of its consciousness against a single foe within 100 feet. That target must succeed on a DC 22 Will save or take 2d6 points of Wisdom damage. Though overmind blast isn't a fear effect, a creature that has immunity to fear or a save bonus against fear receives a +4 bonus on the saving throw. The save DC is Charisma-based.

A creature that is reduced to 0 Wisdom by an overmind blast is unconscious, but its body mutters, "Thoon . . . Thoon . . . " repeatedly until consciousness returns.

A Thoon elder brain is an elder brain that has been twisted by its time in the Far Realm and now leads the mind flayers of Thoon.

Strategies and Tactics

A Thoon elder brain is best used as a climactic encounter—the big, bad monster at the end of an adventure. By the time the PCs reach a Thoon elder brain, they should have fought their way past dozens of mind flayers and other creatures of Thoon.

A Thoon elder brain's tactics depend on whether it believes one or more foes to be vulnerable to its powers of domination. If so, the elder brain uses each of its mental actions to order an opponent to turn on that foe's allies. If this tactic fails twice, the Thoon elder brain abandons it.

Its tactics also depend on the number of opponents. If a Thoon elder brain is beset by multiple foes in melee, it uses its confusion sphere to disrupt its opponents' tactics and its tentacles to damage anyone who isn't confused. In situations when a Thoon elder brain has allies or is facing only a few adversaries, it uses its overmind blast from a safe distance. With its physical action, it readies a tentacle attack in case a foe moves within reach.

Ecology

Like a traditional mind flayer elder brain, a Thoon elder brain subsists on tadpolelike immature mind flayers. Also, like all creatures of Thoon, it requires distilled quintessence on a weekly basis, or it slowly starves.

Environment: The sole known example of a Thoon elder brain has spent its entire existence floating within a briny pool in a central chamber of the Thoon nautiloid. However, if a Thoon elder brain reproduces itself, any underground environment is appropriate. A Thoon elder brain is always near mind flayers and other creatures of Thoon.

Typical Physical Characteristics: A Thoon elder brain is 8 feet across and weighs about 800 pounds. Its tentacles reach a length of almost 20 feet. It's difficult for a Thoon elder brain to uncurl its tentacles completely, so its effective reach is only 10 feet.

A Thoon elder brain doesn't visibly age. Sometimes individual tentacles atrophy and wither away, but they're quickly replaced with fresh, quintessence-fueled limbs.

Alignment: A Thoon elder brain is neutral evil, as are most followers of Thoon. Its efforts to gather quintessence without regard for the costs to others are unapologetically evil. It keeps its followers tightly organized among themselves (a lawful trait), but it can behave unpredictably and without a clear long-term plan (a hallmark of chaos).

Society

Just one Thoon elder brain currently exists. It's the one that leads the mind flayers of Thoon from place to place, searching out new sources of quintessence.

In most respects, a Thoon elder brain behaves like a traditional mind flayer elder brain. It's imperious, brilliant, and

AN ELDER BRAIN AT CR 15?

Both *Lords of Madness* and *Underdark* have statistics for a mind flayer elder brain. It's a fine monster, but it's CR 25, which limits how many campaigns can use it—it's difficult to build an adventure in which both CR 8 mind flayers and their CR 25 leader pose appropriate challenges.

The Thoon elder brain occupies encounter-design space closer to the rank-and-file mind flayer. Because it relies on a smaller set of psionic abilities, it's also easier for a DM to run.

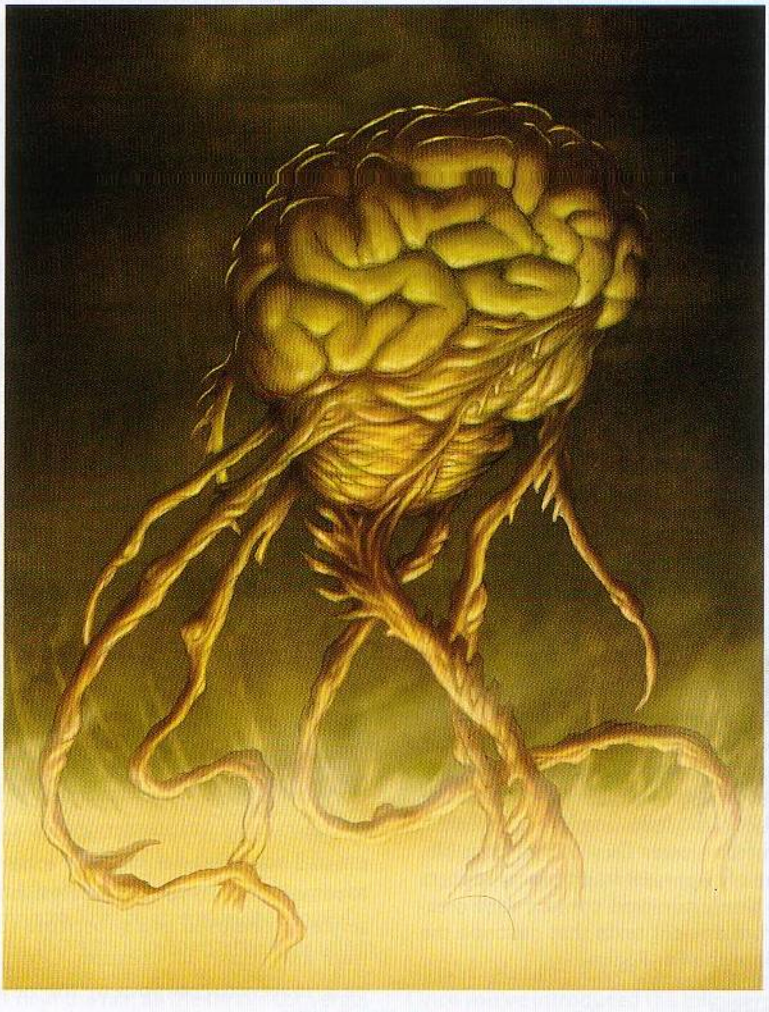
The existence of this elder brain doesn't necessarily mean that a CR 25 elder brain that goes to the Far Realm comes back at CR 15. Whatever a Thoon elder brain was before it returned to the Far Realm is beyond the realm of PC knowledge.

You can certainly file off the serial numbers, so to speak, and use a Thoon elder brain as a normal mind flayer elder brain. If you want both sorts of elder brains in your game, you can posit that Thoon elder brains lead smaller mind flayer colonies, and the elder brains described in *Lords of Madness* and *Underdark* lead vast mind flayer cities.

utterly confident in its abilities. However, it has been touched by the Far Realm, so it sometimes behaves in strange ways, telepathically broadcasting gibberish or making arbitrary decisions that seem to make quintessence-gathering more difficult. Whether the Thoon elder brain is irrational or merely several moves ahead of everyone else is an unanswered question.

The Thoon elder brain communicates telepathically with the rest of the mind flayers of Thoon, delivering orders and making announcements in a telepathic "voice" so intense that it's slightly painful. It ends each message with, "All hail Thoon!"

If the PCs are adventuring within a mind flayer base or the nautiloid vessel itself, they should hear several telepathic messages from the Thoon elder brain before they encounter it in person. The messages range from the mundane—"Gleaner Group Twelve, report to the Black Spire. All hail Thoon!"—to the threatening—"Intruders have been detected. Kill all but the elf. Bring the elf to the main quintessence processor. All hail Thoon!"



Thoon elder brain

Illus. by D. Allsop

Advanced Thoon Elder Brains

If you add Hit Dice to a Thoon elder brain, increase its spell resistance and caster level by 1 for every Hit Die you add.

SAMPLE ENCOUNTERS

Because of the wide range of Challenge Ratings among the followers of Thoon, they can serve as villains for adventures spanning many level ranges.

Spy Ring (EL 7): A Thoon infiltrator and two Thoon thralls are the mind flayers' first foothold in a community. They keep a low profile, but part of their mandate is to learn all they can about powerful travelers passing through town. The Thoon infiltrator might decide to preemptively attack the characters before they can become a threat, or perhaps the PCs interrupt the infiltrator in the midst of spawning a third Thoon thrall. The Thoon creatures use typical tactics, attempting to kill the characters. The infiltrator is not worried about death, since it can revive itself later on.

Hidden Headquarters (EL 9): A Thoon infiltrator, four Thoon thralls, and a stormcloud of Thoon have set up an outpost in an out-of-the-way cabin near a small town. The Thoon infiltrator and Thoon thrall go about their business, while the hidden stormcloud uses its tremorsense to detect interlopers (making the group difficult to surprise). If caught, the Thoon thralls and the stormcloud of Thoon try to hold off the PCs while the Thoon infiltrator runs into the woods, carrying off important papers, including a map showing the location of the mind flayers' main base.

Quintessence Prospectors (EL 9): The characters have found evidence that a seemingly normal person is not who she appears to be, but if they go after her, they get more than they bargained for. They quickly discover that she is a Thoon infiltrator, but a bigger surprise is the shadow flayer lurking nearby, ready to grab a captive if the Thoon infiltrator telepathically identifies someone as a target. If the PCs have any NPC allies who seem like easy targets, the shadow flayer goes after them. Otherwise, it grabs the character who seems like the weakest threat.

Intruder Response Team (EL 11): The PCs have been detected near a Thoon stronghold. Four scythers of Thoon and a Thoon soldier receive telepathic orders: Destroy any intruders they find. None of the constructs is particularly subtle, although one of the scythers stays back and aims *searing light* at an unengaged character.

Birthing Suite (EL 11): In a large, oval room, a madcrafter of Thoon is processing quintessence while a Thoon soldier stands guard. The Thoon soldier rushes into melee combat when the PCs enter, and the madcrafter retreats, launching spawn. It then unleashes a *mind blast* or two at the characters. If the PCs engage the madcrafter in melee or start to gain the upper hand against the Thoon soldier, the madcrafter launches more spawn and continues to use *mind blast* with its standard action until it is no longer capable of doing so.

War Patrol (EL 12): A Thoon disciple and two Thoon soldiers are searching for enemies. If the disciple thinks they can defeat the PCs, it directs the Thoon soldiers into melee and starts using *mind blast* (which the Thoon soldiers are immune to) in the ensuing battle. If the Thoon disciple is near death, it retreats, ordering any remaining Thoon soldiers to cover its escape. The Thoon soldiers fight until destroyed—the mind flayers are confident that more will emerge from the cocoons.

Brain Patrol (EL 14): A Thoon hulk and two normal mind flayers (*MM* 186) are hunting for any sentient creatures, intending to claim their brains. Lately, the followers of Thoon have been unable to find a sufficient supply of brains, so not only are these creatures hunting out in the open with little regard for secrecy, they are reckless and exceptionally dangerous. The mind flayers lurk well behind the Thoon hulk, so the PCs might not know they're facing multiple enemies at first. Tactics are simple: The mind flayers use *mind blast*, and the Thoon hulk grapples. If their adversaries seem reasonably subdued, the mind flayers attempt to extract the brain of any creature a Thoon hulk is grappling.

If a mind flayer is defeated, the other flees, telepathically ordering the Thoon hulk to fight as a rear guard. If both mind flayers are defeated, the Thoon hulk fights until destroyed.

Sanctum Battle (EL 17): The central chamber of the Thoon nautiloid ship houses the elder brain's pool, along with bizarre artifacts and multiple shrines to Thoon. When intruders arrive, they see only one Thoon hulk and two Thoon disciples. The Thoon elder brain lurks in the background, then reveals itself at a dramatic point in the battle, rising from its briny pool.

The chamber itself is circular, with a high ceiling and a recessed area encircling the pool. A narrow passageway leads in, allowing the Thoon hulk to block the way with its body to buy some time for the others. The Thoon disciples cast spells, and the elder brain uses *overmind blast* and its spell-like abilities. When the elder brain leaves its pool and gets close to the PCs, the Thoon disciples move behind it to heal it.

THOON ELDER BRAIN LORE

Characters who have ranks in Knowledge (dungeoneering) can learn more about a Thoon elder brain. When a character makes a successful skill check, the following lore is revealed, including the information from lower DCs. When possible, cast the information in one of two ways: fragmentary reports from creatures that have barely survived contact with creatures of Thoon or hints from ancient texts that describe the consequences of delving into the Far Realm.

Knowledge (Dungeoneering)

DC	Result
30	This is a Thoon elder brain, a powerful aberration. It possesses incredible telepathy, which it uses to issue commands to minions of Thoon. Its tentacles are coated in acid.
35	Unlike most creatures, a Thoon elder brain is capable of simultaneously engaging in mental and physical combat at full efficiency. Among its potent mental attacks is a confusion effect that affects everyone near the Thoon elder brain.
40	The Thoon elder brain was an immature elder brain when it crossed over into the Far Realm. It came back twisted by that place of madness, devoted to a mysterious force named Thoon. Since then, it has commanded a nautiloid vessel across the planes, searching for a mysterious substance called quintessence.

TYPICAL TREASURE

Thoon disciples and shadow flayers have standard treasure, as do Thoon infiltrators and Thoon thralls (though infiltrators usually take any appealing items away from thralls). Thoon hulks, Thoon soldiers, stormclouds of Thoon, and scythers of Thoon don't have any wealth of their own, but they are often assigned duties that put them near treasure; generate standard treasure for them in this case.

Madcrafters of Thoon are incapable of going out to acquire wealth, but many followers of Thoon pay them tribute. Shadow flayers and Thoon disciples that want servants of their own might trade treasure or fresh brains to a madcrafter willing to create one. Madcrafters have standard treasure.

Mind flayers of Thoon maintain a large treasure hoard that can be found near the Thoon elder brain. Art items in the treasure hoard have twice the value indicated on page 55 of the *Dungeon Master's Guide*. Because the mind flayers of Thoon have been traveling across the planes gathering quintessence, their hoard is a good place to introduce particularly weird, otherworldly treasures, such as strangely marked coinage, bizarre and disturbing art, and magic items with ornamentation that is clearly of extraplanar origin.

The value of quintessence—to anyone except the followers of Thoon—is deliberately left vague. This doesn't have to remain true in your campaign, however. Perhaps quintessence can be used as a substitute for experience points in item and construct creation. Quintessence could instead be a material component for new spells or rituals you introduce into your campaign, or it could be an optional component that makes certain types of magic more potent. Items and constructs created using quintessence can have weird quirks and drawbacks. Spells cast using it are bizarre or take on aberrant aspects. The moral implications of using a material gathered from innocent (or not) sentient creatures also comes into play. If you use quintessence in one or more of these ways, or make it valuable at all, consider that value when assigning treasure to encounters you create using the followers of Thoon.

THOON IN EBERRON

Many mind flayers built a nautiloid vessel and somehow found their way back to Xoriat, the Realm of Madness. They also managed to return to Eberron. The journey itself is supposed to be impossible, so many of the great powers of

Eberron (the Inspired, the dragons, and the Lords of Dust, for starters) want to know how the mind flayers of Thoon accomplished the journey. What the mind flayers met on Xoriat is also a mystery that other powers might like to unravel.

Thoon could be a daelkyr overlord so powerful as to nearly be a god. This mysterious entity could instead be another creature floating on the insane currents of Xoriat's layers. Or Thoon could be a philosophical mission initiated by some entity, chance contact, or dark force awakening on Xoriat.

Regardless of the truth, the mind flayers of Thoon are a dire threat to Eberron. Their beliefs could spread through Khyber, emboldening the forces of madness. If the doctrine of Thoon spreads wide enough, and enough quintessence is gathered, the return of Xoriat might be close behind.

THOON IN FAERÛN

Shortly after the most recent appearance of an avatar of Ilsensine (*Expanded Psionics Handbook* 222) in the grand and highly religious illithid city of Oryndoll (*Underdark* 168), an adventurous band of mind flayers from the Loretaker creed left the Lowerdark on a pilgrimage to the Cavern of Thought on the fiendish plane of Deep Caverns. Whether they arrived in Ilsensine's abode is unknown, a fact none of the pilgrims now confirm or deny. They brought back with them the belief in Thoon, a doctrine seen as heretical by the orthodox clergy of the illithid deity in Oryndoll. So the followers of Thoon, outcast from their home city, now travel the Underdark, occasionally raiding the surface, searching for quintessence and spreading the philosophy of Thoon.

INTRODUCING THOON INTO YOUR GAME

The mind flayers of Thoon crave quintessence above all else, and the machinations they undertake to fill their matrices might bring them into conflict with the PCs.

Most campaigns involving Thoon introduce the mind flayers and their servitors in one of two ways: Low-level campaigns start with Thoon infiltrators and their thralls, while mid-level campaigns confront the mind flayers and their more powerful creations directly.

THE LOW-LEVEL THOON CAMPAIGN

If you're introducing Thoon to your low-level game, here are some seeds for possible adventures.

- A small frontier village has repulsed a large band of orc marauders. Scattered reports from the frontier indicate that some villagers exploded after being affected by strange magic. The characters are sent to investigate the village—right into the arms of a Thoon infiltrator, a lurking stormcloud of Thoon, and several Thoon thralls. The stormcloud of Thoon senses quintessence within the PCs, but the characters move out of range after only 1 round—before it's clear which of them contains quintessence. Because the infiltrator doesn't want to reveal itself, it directs its Thoon thralls to cause havoc near its lair, hoping to attract attention. Meanwhile, it sends its most trusted thrall to join the party, spreading rumors of a reward if "someone" can put an end to the disturbance. When the PCs near the lair, all the thralls converge, and the traitor reveals its true nature.
- Following the trail of a questing high-level paladin they're supposed to deliver a message to, the characters find a cave with several slain mind flayers and five egglike containers—matrices of quintessence, which neither the PCs nor the paladin have heard of. If the characters take the matrices, a recovery team of infiltrators and thralls starts to shadow them, attacking whenever it's inconvenient for the party. The followers of Thoon don't reveal their purpose, leaving the PCs to wonder, "Who are these guys who keep attacking us? And why?"
- A Thoon infiltrator disguised as a master alchemist gives the PCs a magic ankh capable of detecting quintessence (functionally giving the Sense Quintessence feat to a spellcasting character), then sends them out on a series of missions to gather it. Eventually the characters might grow suspicious of where all the quintessence is going—especially when they notice that some people have quintessence within them as well. When they confront the master alchemist, the mind flayers waiting in the wings reveal themselves.

THE MID-LEVEL THOON CAMPAIGN

The simplest way to introduce the mind flayers of Thoon to a mid-level party is to include a group of them at an adventure site, where the aberrations are engaged in some quintessence-gathering. Beyond the most obvious way, here are a couple of adventure seeds for mid-level characters capable of tussling with the mind flayers of Thoon.

- Members of an extended family of nobles start disappearing, and the PCs must figure out who's kidnapping them, then rescue them. The kidnappers are mind flayers that have discovered that the family's bloodline is rich in quintessence. Rather than harvest quintessence from the nobles directly, they plan to mentally enslave them, then artificially breed hundreds more—a "quintessence herd."
- A dwarf stronghold has been overwhelmed by mind flayers and their servitors, and a few refugees beg the characters to liberate their home. Most dwarves survived the mind flayer takeover, and they're being forced to mine quintessence-rich ore from caverns underneath the stronghold.

SUBSEQUENT EXPOSITION

Once you've introduced the followers of Thoon, the players and their characters should get curious about what all this "Thoon" and "quintessence" stuff is. It's okay if the players (and characters) don't know exactly what they're facing. You're trying to evoke a sense of weirdness—a "What is the deal with these guys?" feeling among your players.

But once you've evoked that feeling, the PCs are bound to employ everything—research to interrogation to divination spells—to learn more about these strange creatures. That's good. An explanation at this point helps ground the followers of Thoon in the world and makes subsequent encounters with them more interesting. You don't need to hand a full description of Thoon to the characters on a silver platter, but if they make reasonable inquiries, they get reasonable information back. The various lore sidebars throughout this section have high DCs—the mind flayers have many means to guard their secrets, to be sure—but it makes for a better game if the characters eventually learn the true nature of what they're fighting.

MOCKERY BUGS

Mockery bugs are a strain of magical beasts descended from ankhegs. They come in two forms—the mockery monarch and its dreadful progeny, mockery drones.

MOCKERY MONARCH

An immense silvery insect turns toward you, its bloated abdomen dragging on the ground. Six slender legs support its segmented body. Its mandibles are large, but they are nothing compared to its cavernous mouth. The creature eyes you with an air that suggests it's more than a stupid beast.

Mockery Monarch CR 14

Usually NE Large magical beast
Init +7; **Senses** darkvision 60 ft., low-light vision, tremorsense 60 ft.; Listen +27, Spot +27
Languages consume language; cannot speak

AC 34, touch 25, flat-footed 31
(–1 size, +3 Dex, +13 deflection, +9 natural)
hp 150 (20 HD)
Resist spell turning
Fort +14, **Ref** +15, **Will** +10

Speed 20 ft. (4 squares), burrow 20 ft.
Melee bite +25 (3d6+7 plus 1d6 acid)
Space 10 ft.; **Reach** 5 ft.
Base Atk +20; **Grp** +29
Atk Options Cleave, Power Attack
Special Actions improved grab, swallow whole, spawn mockery drone

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Abilities Str 21, Dex 17, Con 14, Int 12, Wis 14, Cha 6
SA acid, improved grab, swallow whole, spawn mockery drone
Feats Alertness, Cleave, Improved Initiative, Improved Natural Attack (bite), Iron Will, Power Attack, Weapon Focus (bite)
Skills Climb +28, Listen +27, Spot +27
Advancement 21–40 HD (Large); 41–60 HD (Huge)

Consume Language (Su) When a mockery monarch consumes a humanoid, it gains the ability to understand languages that humanoid spoke. It retains understanding of those languages but cannot speak them.

Spell Turning (Su) Spells and spell-like abilities that specifically target a mockery monarch are reflected back on their casters as if affected by a *spell turning* spell. Effect and area spells are not affected, nor are touch spells. This ability has no maximum number of spell levels it can turn.

Improved Grab (Ex) To use this ability, a mockery monarch must hit an opponent smaller than itself with a bite. It can then attempt to start a grapple as a free action without provoking attacks of opportunity.

Swallow Whole (Ex) A mockery monarch can swallow a grappled opponent smaller than itself by making a successful grapple check.

A swallowed creature takes 1d6+5 points of bludgeoning damage and 5 points of acid damage per round it spends in the mockery monarch's abdomen. A swallowed creature can cut its way out by using a light slashing or piercing weapon to deal 25 points of damage to the abdomen (AC 15). Once the creature exits, muscular action closes the hole; another swallowed opponent must cut its own way out.

A Large mockery monarch's abdomen can hold 2 Medium, 8 Small, 32 Tiny, or 128 Diminutive or smaller opponents.

Spawn Mockery Drone (Su) A humanoid reduced to 0 or fewer hit points when inside a mockery monarch's abdomen becomes a mockery drone. The spawned mockery drone emerges from the mockery monarch's abdomen at the beginning of the monarch's next turn. Although a mockery drone looks like the consumed humanoid, it is actually a new creature with none of the consumed humanoid's abilities. Mockery drones are not enslaved to the monarch, but they are loyal to it.

Mockery monarchs are clever insectile magical beasts that want to spawn as many mockery drones as they can. They lack the ability to speak, but they are curious

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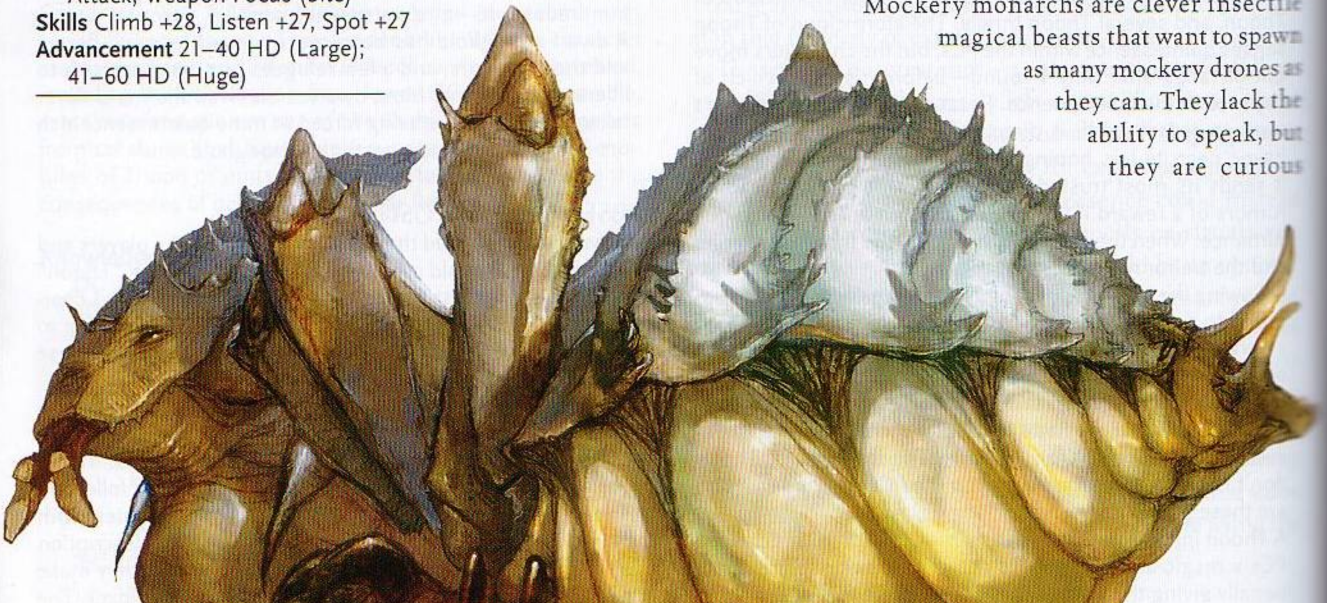


Mockery monarch

about sentient humanoids, consuming them and creating progeny that appear intelligent but are not much smarter than animals.

Strategies and Tactics

Mockery monarchs are wise enough to live near civilized places and shrewd enough to hide themselves well. They then pick off humanoids that stray off beaten paths or travel alone. Each victim becomes a mockery drone, which the mockery monarch uses to lure prey and other humanoids to it.

Older mockery monarchs are even more insidious, having learned tactics that draw humanoids in rather than scaring them off. It might leave a clue that a missing child entered the sewer near its lair, or it could kill livestock and leave signs of a mundane ankheg attack. Such a crafty mockery monarch usually amasses a large number of drones before it is found out and hunted down.

Despite their intelligence, mockery monarchs have straightforward tactics. They bite and grab as often as possible, swallowing every humanoid they can successfully grapple. For defense, they simply rely on their hard carapaces and the weird energy surrounding them that deflects spells and weapons.

MOCKERY DRONE

The shopkeeper turns toward you, a silly grin on his face. "Here's your change. Here's your change!" he says, his voice rising to a shout. Then, in a spout of blood, his face detaches from his skull and leaps toward you, propelled by a centipedelike body with foot-long spines. "Here's . . . your . . . change!" shouts the centipede with the shopkeeper's face as it scuttles your way.

MOCKERY DRONE CR 9

Usually NE Medium magical beast
Init +7; **Senses** darkvision 60 ft., low-light vision; Listen +4, Spot +4
Languages Common (speaks strangely)

AC 23, touch 18, flat-footed 20; barbs (+3 Dex, +5 deflection, +5 natural)
hp 114 (12 HD)
Fort +14, **Ref** +11, **Will** +6

Speed 30 ft. (6 squares), climb 30 ft.
Melee 2 claws +19 each (2d6+6/19–20) and spines +13 (1d8+3)
Space 5 ft.; **Reach** 5 ft.
Base Atk +12; **Grp** +18
Special Actions humanoid seeming, spit acid

Abilities Str 23, Dex 16, Con 22, Int 3, Wis 14, Cha 11
SA barbs, spit acid
Feats Alertness, Improved Critical (claw), Improved Initiative, Power Attack, Weapon Focus (claw)
Skills Climb +21, Disguise +8 (+16 sight only), Listen +4, Spot +4
Advancement 13–23 HD (Medium)

Barbs (Su) Any opponent that touches a mockery drone, strikes it with a natural weapon, strikes it with a nonreach melee weapon, or grapples it takes 5 points of piercing and slashing damage from the creature's barbs. A foe can take damage from this ability only once per turn.

Humanoid Seeming (Ex) When born, a mockery drone looks like a Medium or Small humanoid. But the mockery drone is actually an insectile creature living inside that humanoid's skin and animating it from within. When inside a humanoid form, a mockery drone doesn't have its natural attacks or a climb speed, and its barbs are ineffective since they're inside the humanoid body.

As a swift action, a mockery drone can burst from the humanoid's head, retaining the face but discarding the rest of the body. The mockery drone bursts forth as soon as it senses danger. If the humanoid body is struck before the mockery drone can burst forth, that body can take 10 points of damage before the mockery drone is harmed.

Spit Acid (Ex) Once every 6 hours, as a standard action, a mockery drone can spit acid in a 60-foot line, dealing 10d4 points of acid damage (Reflex DC 22 half). The save DC is Constitution-based.

Skills Mockery drones have a +8 racial bonus on Climb checks and can choose to take 10 on Climb checks, even if rushed or threatened. Mockery drones have a +8 racial bonus on Disguise checks made to fool others who see them, but do not hear them speak.

A mockery drone lives a confusing and often brief life. It's born in a humanoid form but without coherent memories, skills, or language. It has an instinctive desire to bring other humanoids closer to the mockery monarch, but it isn't smart enough to think of sophisticated ways to accomplish this task.

Strategies and Tactics

Mockery drones stay near their monarch, but the monarch sometimes sends them forth to gather more fodder. Drones on

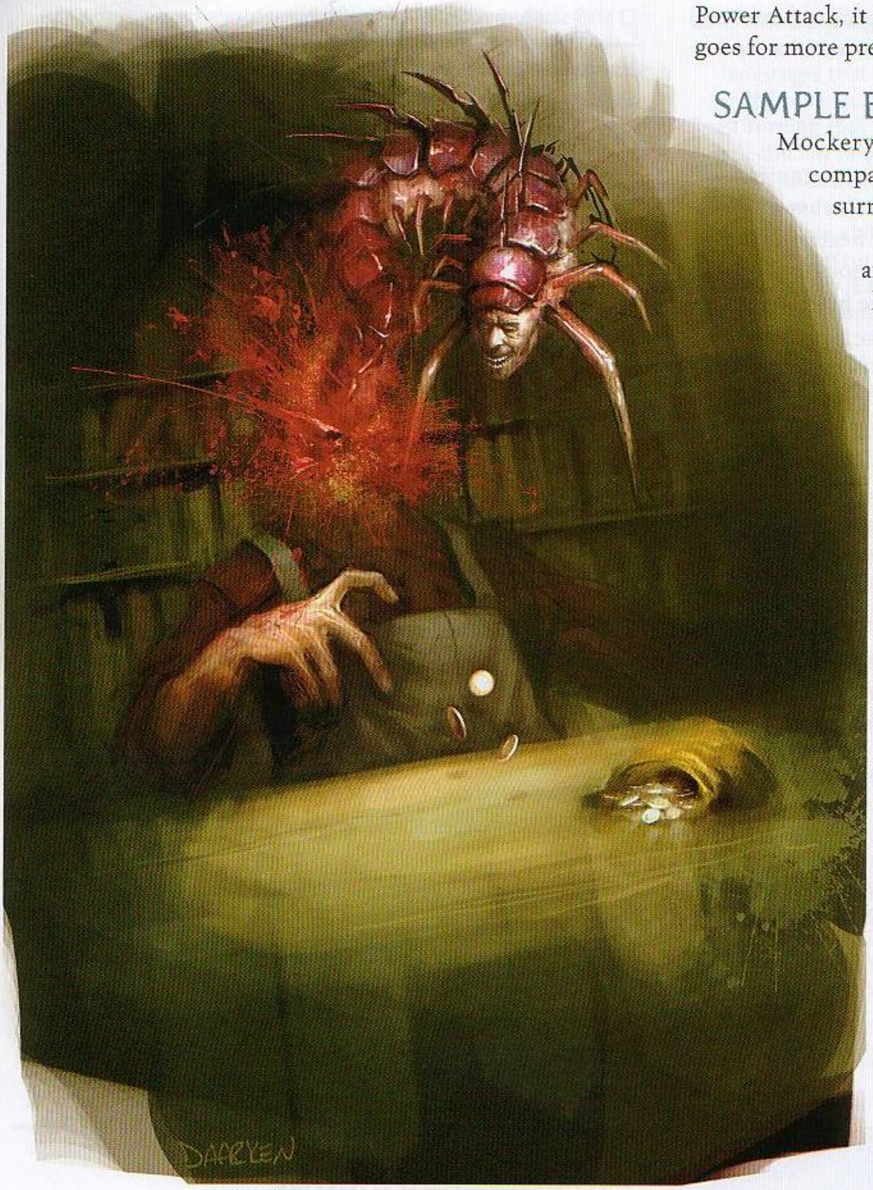
MOCKERY BUG LORE

Characters who have ranks in Knowledge (arcana) can learn more about mockery bugs. When a character makes a successful skill check, the following lore is revealed, including the information from lower DCs.

Knowledge (Arcana)

DC	Result
19	Centipedelike creatures that hide within humanoid bodies, mockery drones are magical beasts that can burst out of their macabre disguises and attack without warning. They have long, sharp barbs that can cut and stab those in close combat with them.
24	Mockery drones are the offspring of a creature called a mockery monarch, a magical beast born from an ankheg. Mockery monarchs are intelligent insects capable of swallowing their foes whole.
29	A mockery monarch gives birth to mockery drones that look like humanoids it swallows. Its carapace can reflect spells back upon their caster.

Illus. by Daarken



Mockery drone

such a mission usually wander around until they attract someone's attention. They then meander back toward the monarch, hoping to lead their pursuers into its waiting mandibles. Though not very bright, mockery drones do have a feel for when someone "recognizes" their humanoid form, and they use this ability to their advantage. Some people who follow a relative who is acting strangely end up becoming new drones.

When it senses danger, a mockery drone bursts out of the head of its humanoid form, revealing itself for the monster it is. It keeps the humanoid face, however, and continues to speak in repetitive or nonsensical phrases as it battles whatever threatened it. A mockery drone spits acid at enemies at its first opportunity. Then it enters melee combat, using Power Attack in the beginning, trying to take out opponents as quickly as possible. If it misses repeatedly when using Power Attack, it gives up on dealing a lot of damage and goes for more precise shots.

SAMPLE ENCOUNTERS

Mockery monarchs have no other monarchs as companions, but loyal mockery drones usually surround them.

Town Idiots (EL 11+): A mockery monarch has converted all the inhabitants of a hamlet into mockery drones. Any visitor immediately notices that everyone in town has been rendered smilingly idiotic, with people carrying empty pails from the well, a town crier repeating, "Midnight and all's well" in the middle of the day, and a woodcutter splitting the same log until it's mere splinters. When confused or discovered, the mockery drones attack, and two or more are always together. The characters have multiple fights with mockery drones before they figure out that the mockery monarch is in a cellar beneath the inn.

Mockery Seekers (EL 15): A mockery monarch has just moved into the ruins of an ancient border keep near several small settlements, and it already has four drones with it. Members of a shadowy organization have designs on turning the mockery monarch to their despicable purposes. Perhaps they are under the mistaken impression that it can create secret agents for them, or maybe they know it can convert normal folk into dangerous creatures. One way or another, the organization's agents are willing to use underhanded means to find the mockery monarch and secure its cooperation, including kidnapping innocents to hand over to the beast. The PCs have to defend the area against the agents and the mockery monarch.

ECOLOGY

A tiny fraction of ankheg eggs produce mockery monarchs. A newborn mockery monarch usually leaves the nest as soon as it can.

Seemingly produced by magic worked on ankhegs, mockery monarchs look like their lesser kin. But the resemblance is deceiving. From their intellect to their reflective exoskeletons, mockery monarchs show some of the side effects of eldritch energy gone awry.

Luckily for the world at large, mockery monarchs are sterile. They can't mate with ankhegs or other mockery monarchs, so they have no biological drive to find others of their kind or to remain among their bestial relatives. Their only urge is to find and consume humanoids and to create mockery drones.

Mockery monarchs can go a long time without food, and they can travel far without being seen. Their burrows produce tunnels only if they choose to create such openings, so it's easy for a mockery monarch to arrive undetected in a civilized area and set up a central nest. Then the monarch goes to work converting citizens into mockery drones.

Mockery drones are incapable of reproducing. They exist only to protect a mockery monarch and entice humanoids to approach the monarch. Drones never willingly stray far from their monarch, but sometimes they get lost or survive an attack that kills their mockery monarch. Such mockery drones wander aimlessly, trying to make some sense of their jumbled memories. Once they lose their humanoid form, mockery drones attack anything weaker than they are.

Unlike shapechangers, mockery drones can use their humanoid disguise only once. Once they burst out of the face and reveal their true forms, they remain in their insectile form for the rest of their lives.

Environment: Mockery monarchs can be found nearly anywhere, though they prefer warm environments. Abandoned buildings and ruins hold special interest for the creatures. They dwell in or near civilized lands, where they can find new fodder to turn into mockery drones. Mockery drones never stray far from their monarch.

Mockery drone nests are usually open, underground areas with winding tunnels that lead to the mockery monarch's lair. The tunnels are at least 5 feet wide by 5 feet tall.

Typical Physical Characteristics: Mockery monarchs are massive, segmented insects with silvery carapaces. Their mouths are gaping, muscular holes set with enormous mandibles. All mockery monarchs have grossly distended abdomens. An adult mockery monarch is 10 feet long and weighs about 1,000 pounds.

Mockery drones look like spined centipedes with grinning humanoid faces. They average 5 feet long and weigh 200 pounds.

Alignment: Mockery monarchs have a curiosity about other intelligent beings, but they have no compunctions about causing suffering or killing. They aren't callously destructive, but they have no sense of fairness or honor. Careful and conniving in pursuit of their goal of eating humanoids and creating mockery drones, mockery monarchs care little for other creatures. They are usually neutral evil.

Mockery drones are similar to their monarch. However, they are more brutal and direct.

SOCIETY

Mockery monarchs have no society beyond the collective nature of the ankheg nest that spawned them. They're curious about the outside world, and they search for other intelligent creatures. That search isn't for contact alone; it's to find victims from which to spawn mockery drones.

It's possible for a mockery monarch to strike up an alliance with another creature. Such alliances end when the mockery monarch gives in to the temptation to turn its allies into mockery drones.

Mockery drones are free-willed and capricious creatures that enjoy killing. Fortunately for their would-be victims, they're barely smarter than animals and incapable of group organization.

A mockery drone wanders around, trying to engage in some semblance of the activities it "remembers" from its humanoid life. But with dull wits and scrambled memories, a mockery drone quickly reveals that it's no ordinary humanoid when someone interacts with it. Mockery drones repeat nonsensical phrases or mindlessly repeat the same actions until some new stimulus presents itself.

TYPICAL TREASURE

Mockery monarchs gather whatever attracts their interest, carefully examining the gear from creatures they've killed and turned into mockery drones. They're interested in the tools and trinkets that humanoids carry, so they keep such objects. Even so, they have little sense of what wealth means, and no notion of buying or selling. A mockery monarch has standard treasure for its Challenge Rating.

Mockery drones have standard treasure for their Challenge Rating. The treasure is spread around the drones' environs. In humanoid form, mockery drones employ only obviously useful implements such as tools, weapons, and armor.

MOCKERY BUGS IN EBERRON

Mockery monarchs and mockery drones emerged in the Lower City of Sharn near the end of the Last War, rumored to be the result of experiments with Brelish ankhegs and roach thralls (*Sharn* 184) gone wrong. House Phiarlan and House Thuranni have been implicated, but each house blames the other. Despite efforts to destroy them, a few mockery monarchs escaped into the wild. Mockery bugs have been rooted out as far east as Valenar, and the hags of Droaam are rumored to have a few in their service.

MOCKERY BUGS IN FAERÛN

Mockery monarchs and mockery drones were originally bred in ancient Netheril—whether their breeding into the ankheg population was deliberate or accidental is unknown. Wild mockery bugs are rare but found wherever ankhegs are.

The Zhentarim have experimented with mockery bugs recently, using them to mixed effect in their expansion across the North. The Zhent mockery monarchs obediently followed orders at first, but as they created more mockery drones, they grew more independent and resentful of their masters. Now, renegade mockery monarchs make war on the Zhentarim.

PHANTOM

Phantoms are creatures that can become incorporeal.

KUGAN, PHANTOM GHAST NINJA

Preceded by the stench of death, a humanoid form clad in loose black clothing appears from the shadows, a violet cloak trailing behind it. Its face is wrapped in black cloth except for the eyes and mouth—eyes that burn with red light in sunken sockets, and a mouth full of oversized fangs. The creature's black-gloved hands end in long claws.

KUGAN CR 7

Male phantom ghast ninja* 4
* Class described in *Complete Adventurer*
CE Medium undead
Init +5; **Senses** darkvision 60 ft.; Listen +11, Spot +11
Languages Common, Draconic
Aura stench (10 ft.)

AC 28, touch 24, flat-footed 23; phantom defense (+5 Dex, +5 Wis, +4 deflection, +4 natural)
hp 45 (8 HD)
Immune undead immunities; see incorporeal jaunt
Resist evasion, +2 turn resistance
Fort +3, **Ref** +11, **Will** +11 (+13 with *ki* power)
Weakness vulnerability to ghost touch

Speed 40 ft. (8 squares); great leap
Melee bite +11 (1d8+6 plus ghoul fever plus paralysis) and 2 claws +9 each (1d6+3 plus paralysis)
Base Atk +5; **Grp** +10
Atk Options Combat Reflexes, phantom strike, sudden strike +2d6
Special Actions ghost step (invisible), incorporeal jaunt, *ki* power 4/day
Combat Gear *potion of inflict moderate wounds*

Abilities Str 20, Dex 20, Con —, Int 12, Wis 20, Cha 18
SQ trapfinding, undead traits; see incorporeal jaunt
Feats Combat Reflexes, Multiattack, Toughness
Skills Balance +13, Bluff +9, Climb +10, Diplomacy +6, Hide +16, Jump +21, Listen +11, Move Silently +16, Spot +11, Tumble +14
Possessions combat gear plus *amulet of mighty fists +1, cloak of resistance +1*

Stench (Ex) Living creatures within 10 feet of Kugan must succeed on a DC 16 Fortitude save or be sickened for 1d6+4 minutes. A creature that succeeds on the save cannot be affected by Kugan's stench again for 24 hours. A *delay poison* or *neutralize poison* spell removes the effect from a sickened creature. Creatures that are immune to poison or that have a saving throw bonus against poison receive those benefits against the stench.
Phantom Defense (Su) See template description.
Ki Power (Su) +2 bonus on Will saves as long as at least one daily use remains. *Complete Adventurer* 8.
Vulnerability to Ghost Touch (Ex) +50% damage from attacks and effects that have the ghost touch property.
Great Leap (Su) Makes Jump checks as if running with the Run feat. *Complete Adventurer* 8.
Ghoul Fever (Su) Disease—bite, Fort DC 16 negates, incubation period 1 day, damage 1d3 Con and 1d3 Dex. The save DC is Charisma-based.
Paralysis (Ex) Those hit by Kugan's bite or claw must succeed on a DC 16 Fortitude save or be paralyzed for 1d4+1 rounds.
Phantom Strike (Su) See template description.
Sudden Strike (Ex) As sneak attack (*PH* 50), but not when flanking. *Complete Adventurer* 8.
Ghost Step (Su) Swift action, one daily ki power use, invisibility for 1 round. *Complete Adventurer* 8.
Incorporeal Jaunt (Su) See template description.

An elite assassin serving a sinister necromancer at the heart of a ninja cult, Kugan is blessed with an unholy array of abilities. By using a secret ritual, Kugan's master granted him the phantom template for his years of honorable and successful service. Kugan had the following ability scores before racial modifications and Hit Dice ability score increases: Str 13, Dex 14, Con 8, Int 10, Wis 15, Cha 12.

Strategies and Tactics

Kugan initiates combat from a distance that he covers with an impressive leap. He lands among his foes to expose them to his stench, then he fights while incorporeal, using his ghost step power to set up his sudden strikes. Incorporeality and Tumble give him all the mobility he needs to choose his targets. He kills clerics first.

Sample Encounter

Kugan works alone.

Phantom Assassin (EL 7): One of the PCs' enemies has employed Kugan's cult to take out one or more of the characters. Kugan stalks the PCs, attacking them when they're vulnerable.

CREATING A PHANTOM

"Phantom" is an acquired template that can be applied to any corporeal creature (referred to hereafter as the base creature). A phantom uses all the base creature's statistics and abilities except as noted here.

The base creature gains abilities from this template based on its Challenge Rating. If the creature's CR increases for any reason, it gains abilities according to its new CR.

Challenge Rating: If the base creature is CR 4 or lower, its new CR is the same as the base creature +1. If the base creature is CR 5 or higher, its new CR is the same as the base creature +2.

PHANTOM LORE

Characters who have ranks in Knowledge (religion) can learn more about phantoms. When a character makes a successful skill check, the following lore is revealed, including the information from lower DCs. Facts about the base creature can be learned only by using the skill appropriate to the base creature's type and Challenge Rating.

Knowledge (Religion)

DC	Result
15+CR	This creature can take on incorporeal traits.
20+CR	Phantoms are vulnerable to attacks made with ghost touch weapons. Powerful phantoms can attack corporeal targets while incorporeal.

Type: Animal and vermin base creatures become magical beasts with the appropriate augmented subtype.

AC: All phantoms gain a deflection bonus to Armor Class equal to their Charisma bonus or +1, whichever is higher. A base creature of CR 5 or higher gains the following special quality.

Phantom Defense (Su): A phantom's armor bonus, deflection bonus, natural armor bonus, and shield bonus count toward its Armor Class, whether it or its attackers are incorporeal or corporeal.

Weakness: A phantom retains all the weaknesses of the base creature, and it gains the following weakness.

Vulnerability to Ghost Touch (Ex): If damaged by a ghost touch attack, a phantom takes half again (+50%) as much damage from that attack, regardless of whether a saving throw is allowed or whether that save succeeds.

Speed: A base creature of CR 4 or lower gains the following special quality.

Incorporeal Movement (Su): When willingly moving, a phantom becomes incorporeal. A phantom can suppress or resume this ability as a move action.

Grp: When incorporeal, a phantom cannot grapple.

Atk Options: A phantom of CR 5 or higher cannot use attack options that require prolonged contact with a target, such as adhesive and similar attacks. A base creature or CR 5 or higher gains the following attack option.

Phantom Strike (Ex): For the purpose of resolving spells, melee attacks, ranged attacks, and other attacks that require only momentary contact to deal damage or have their effects, a phantom is considered to be both incorporeal and corporeal when it is incorporeal. Thus, the phantom receives its normal Strength bonus on attack rolls and damage rolls, and it can use material components to cast its spells.

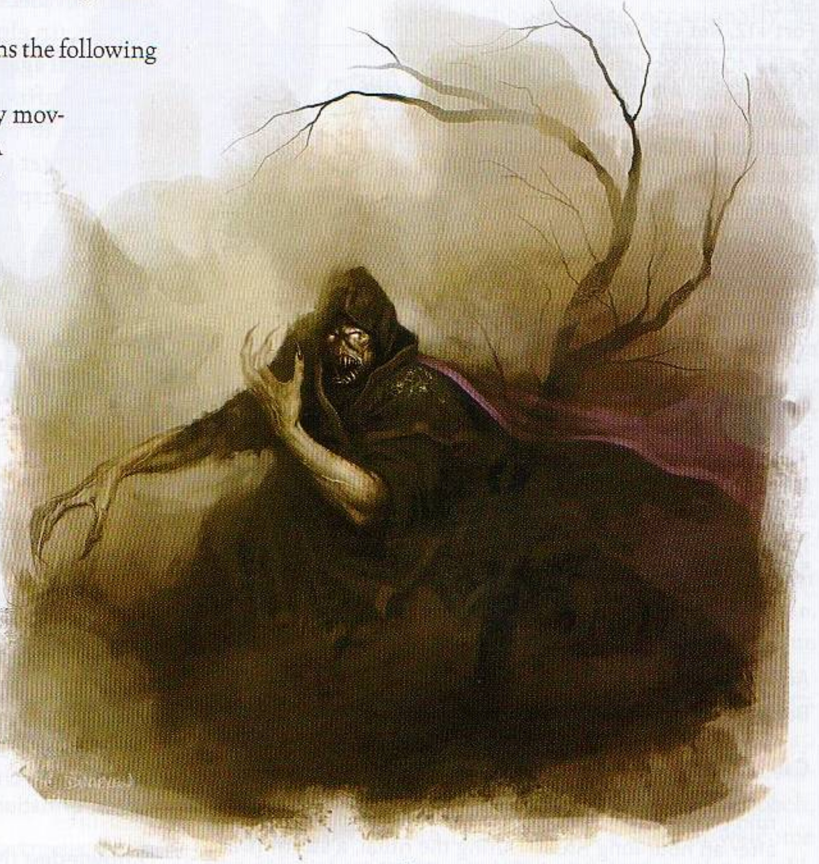
Special Actions: A phantom of CR 5 or higher cannot use special actions that require prolonged contact with a target, such as swallow whole and similar actions. A base creature or CR 5 or higher gains the following special action.

Incorporeal Jaunt (Su): A phantom can become incorporeal as a swift action. It can become corporeal again as a swift action or a standard action.

Level Adjustment: —.

TYPICAL TREASURE

If the base creature ordinarily possesses treasure, the phantom does too, according to the base creature's standard treasure and the phantom's new Challenge Rating.



Kugan

Illus. by Daarken

PHANTOM INCORPOREALITY

When you apply the phantom template to a base creature that has a CR of 4 or lower, that creature has no Strength score when it's moving with its incorporeal movement ability active, nor does it get its armor bonus, natural armor bonus, or shield bonus to AC (unless that bonus comes from a force effect or from an item that has the ghost touch property). Since the creature is incorporeal only when it moves, its attacks aren't affected by its incorporeality even if it uses feats or abilities such as Spring Attack.

When you apply the template to a base creature that has a CR of 5 or higher, don't change the creature's Strength for the purpose of resolving its attacks, and simply give the creature its Charisma bonus as a deflection bonus to AC. Note the special attacks it has that require more than momentary contact with an opponent—those attacks don't work when the creature is incorporeal.

In all cases, a phantom that becomes corporeal when inside a solid object is shunted out of that object toward the nearest open space that can hold the creature, taking 1d6 points of damage per 5 feet it must travel.

When a phantom is incorporeal, items it carries cannot be handled by corporeal creatures. A phantom has incorporeal immunities and incorporeal traits when incorporeal, modified by the exceptions provided by the template.

RUIN CHANTER

On a narrow stone ledge stands a nimble figure garbed in ragged clothes and a rust-colored cloak. A pair of clever black eyes set in a weathered face shine from beneath his wide-brimmed hat. His long, fine fingers hold an ornate black mace. He suddenly licks his parched lips and begins to wail a mournful dirge.

RUIN CHANTER **CR 14**

Usually CN Medium fey (air, earth)
Init +11; **Senses** low-light vision; Listen +26, Spot +26
Languages Auran, Common, Giant, Sylvan, Terran

AC 31, touch 17, flat-footed 24; Dodge, Mobility (+7 Dex, +14 natural)
hp 190 (20 HD); **DR** 15/cold iron and magic
Immune disease, poison
SR 23
Fort +12, **Ref** +19, **Will** +15

Speed 40 ft. (8 squares), fly 40 ft. (perfect)
Melee *+2 adamantine light mace* +20/+15 (1d6+7)
Space 5 ft.; **Reach** 5 ft.
Base Atk +10; **Grp** +15
Special Actions bardic music (countersong, *fascinate* 4 creatures, inspire courage +2, inspire confidence, suggstion, inspire greatness 2 creatures, *song of freedom*), call ruin elemental, infirmity of body, infirmity of mind
Spell-Like Abilities (CL 20th):
3/day—*crushing despair* (DC 21), *rusting grasp* (+15 melee touch, DC 21), *spike stones* (DC 21)

Abilities Str 20, Dex 25, Con 23, Int 18, Wis 17, Cha 25
SA bardic music, call ruin elemental, infirmity of mind, infirmity of body, spell-like abilities
Feats Combat Expertise, Dodge, Endurance, Improved Initiative, Mobility, Weapon Finesse, Weapon Focus (light mace)
Skills Concentration +15, Hide +30, Knowledge (architecture and engineering) +27, Knowledge (history) +27, Listen +26, Move Silently +30, Perform (singing) +30, Search +20, Spot +26, Survival +26, Tumble +30
Advancement 21–40 HD (Medium)

Bardic Music (Su) A ruin chanter has the bardic music ability of a 12th-level bard (*PH* 29).

Call Ruin Elemental (Su) Once per week, when a ruin chanter is aware of interlopers within the ruins it calls home, the ruin chanter can conjure a ruin elemental (page 134) after an hour-long ritual. During the ritual, a storm (*DMG* 94) appropriate for the climate strikes the ruin chanter's home. When the ritual is complete, the storm disappears suddenly and a ruin elemental appears, ready to do the ruin chanter's bidding. Since the ruin elemental serves the ruin chanter until the elemental is destroyed, it's possible for a ruin chanter to have more than one ruin elemental serving it.

Infirmity of Body (Su) By pointing its finger, a ruin chanter can prematurely age an enemy's body. Doing so imposes a –6 penalty to Strength, Dexterity, and Constitution, and causes the victim's hair to turn white, skin to wrinkle, and posture to stoop (Fortitude DC 27 negates). The penalty lasts for 1 hour or until the victim receives a *remove curse* spell. A ruin chanter cannot place both infirmity of body and infirmity of mind on the same creature. The save DC is Charisma-based.

Infirmity of Mind (Su) With a wave of its hand, a ruin chanter can render a creature senile and unable to reliably tell friend from foe. This ability functions as a *confusion* spell (Will DC 27 negates) and makes victims appear elderly just as infirmity of body does. Infirmity of mind lasts for 1 hour or until the victim receives a *remove curse* spell. A ruin chanter cannot place both infirmity of body and infirmity of mind on the same creature. The save DC is Charisma-based.

Ruin chanters, personifications of worldly decay, act as guardians of ancient sites. They channel their sorrow into melancholy songs of glories past and powers of decomposition.

STRATEGIES AND TACTICS

When invaders come to a ruin chanter's home, that chanter calls a ruin elemental as soon as it can. It then sends the elemental against the trespassers, while the ruin chanter uses its infirmity abilities to prematurely age intruders it deems to be the greatest threats. Intermittently, the ruin chanter sings dirges commemorating the ruins' past glory to inspire courage or inspire greatness in itself and its allies.

Ruin chanters are nimble foes, using their feats and flight to deliver precise strikes or maneuver into a good position to use a spell-like ability. They don't give away the fact that they can fly, seeming to move easily over difficult terrain or leap great distances. They use this secret to great advantage in combat, weightlessly "springing" onto unstable structures and luring their opponents into following them, then "stepping off" the construction just as it collapses.

RUIN CHANTER LORE

Characters who have ranks in Knowledge (nature) can learn more about ruin chanters. When a character makes a successful skill check, the following lore is revealed, including the information from lower DCs.

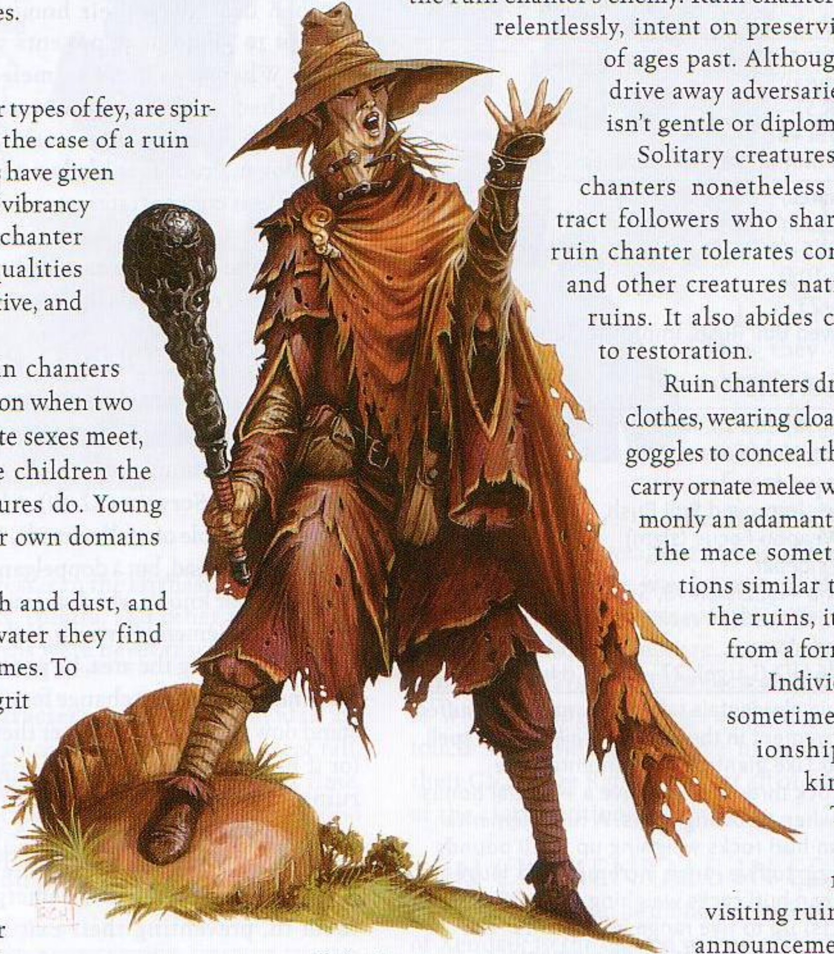
Knowledge (Nature)

DC	Result
24	This is a ruin chanter, a fey guardian of ancient ruins. It is a nimble combatant that can summon biting stones on the ground. Beware its pretenses at being earthbound, for it can actually fly.
29	Ruin chanters have powers that can confuse, depress, and age mortals, as well as corrode metal. They can use a ritual to call ruin elementals to aid them, but this ritual can't be performed during combat.
34	A ruin chanter is as enduring as its ruins. It can't be harmed by disease or poison, and it is resistant to all sorts of spells. Only magic weapons made of cold iron can effectively harm it.

SAMPLE ENCOUNTER

Ruin chanters are solitary creatures, but they're usually found with ruin elemental servants. Occasionally, a bonded pair of ruin chanters can be found in a single locale.

Urban Renewal (EL 15): In ruins from a bygone age under a major city, a ruin chanter and two ruin elementals have taken up residence. The powers that be have decided to demolish the ruins to build an underground ward for dwarves, bringing them into direct conflict with the ruin chanter and its allies.



Ruin chanter

Illus. by R. Horsley

ECOLOGY

Ruin chanters, like other types of fey, are spirits born of the land. In the case of a ruin chanter, sadness and loss have given it life, rather than natural vibrancy and abundance. A ruin chanter reflects these former qualities in its solitary, introspective, and melancholy manner.

Male and female ruin chanters exist. On the rare occasion when two ruin chanters of opposite sexes meet, they mate and produce children the way most mortal creatures do. Young ruin chanters seek their own domains far from their parents.

Ruin chanters eat ash and dust, and they drink whatever water they find within their ruined homes. To them, air full of ancient grit is like a floral perfume. They sleep on piles of rubble.

Environment: These elusive fey are found in locales ravaged by magic or war, or where time has seen the fall of civilization. They haunt the ruins of lost cities, ancient temples, and toppled fortresses. Ruin chanters revel in the dissolution imposed by time, so most of them shy away from populated areas.

Typical Physical Characteristics: Ruin chanters are lanky humanlike creatures, standing between 5 and 6 feet tall. Their skin is weathered, colored tan to gray, with patches of wind-burned red. Eyes sparkle darkly, no whites to be seen, within those hairless faces, and ruin chanters have silvery locks as an aged human might.

Alignment: A ruin chanter is selfish and pessimistic. Caring little for events and creatures outside its demesne, a ruin chanter is openly hostile to those who raid its home for loot. It can be deadly in such a case, though it doesn't try to cause undue suffering. Ruin chanters are usually chaotic neutral, and they are seldom good. Evil ruin chanters try to create ruins from thriving societies.

SOCIETY

A creature that enters a ruin chanter's ruins to do anything other than subsist or restore the glories of the past becomes the ruin chanter's enemy. Ruin chanters harry their foes relentlessly, intent on preserving the grandeur of ages past. Although it is content to drive away adversaries, a ruin chanter isn't gentle or diplomatic.

Solitary creatures by nature, ruin chanters nonetheless occasionally attract followers who share their views. A ruin chanter tolerates constructs, undead, and other creatures native to its chosen ruins. It also abides creatures devoted to restoration.

Ruin chanters dress in earth-toned clothes, wearing cloaks, hats, scarves, or goggles to conceal their features. They carry ornate melee weapons, most commonly an adamantine mace. Though the mace sometimes has decorations similar to those found in the ruins, it isn't necessarily from a former age.

Individual ruin chanters sometimes seek companionship among their kind, often to mate. They respect one another's territory, though, and a visiting ruin chanter sings an announcement to let a potential host know of its approach. The ruin's owner can respond with a song of welcome or a song of warning, greeting or rejecting the would-be guest.

TYPICAL TREASURE

Ruin chanters don't collect treasure, but the antiquities and wonders of the ancients are under their guard. They effectively have double standard treasure for their Challenge Rating. This wealth is spread around the chanter's home ruin, and those who take even the smallest item draw the fey's ire.

RUIN ELEMENTAL

What appeared at first to be the debris of a fallen wall or crumbling building suddenly lurches to its feet. Composed entirely of rubble, this immense hunchbacked biped rumbles quickly toward you, its rocky fists raised.

Ruin Elemental **CR 10**
Usually N Large elemental (earth)
Init +0; **Senses** darkvision 60 ft., low-light vision; Listen +9, Spot +9
Languages Terran

AC 23, touch 9, flat-footed 23
(–1 size, +14 natural)
hp 161 (14 HD); **DR** 5/—
Fort +16, **Ref** +4, **Will** +6
Immune elemental immunities, *spike stones*

Speed 40 ft. (8 squares)
Melee 2 slams +19 each (1d8+9)
Ranged rock +19 (2d6+9)
Space 10 ft.; **Reach** 10 ft.
Base Atk +10; **Grp** +23
Atk Options Improved Bull Rush, Improved Sunder, Power Attack
Special Actions shock wave

Abilities Str 28, Dex 10, Con 24, Int 9, Wis 15, Cha 7
SA rock throwing, shock wave
SQ elemental traits
Feats Brutal Throw*, Improved Bull Rush, Improved Sunder, Power Attack, Weapon Focus (slam)
* New feat; see sidebar.
Skills Hide –1*, Jump +13, Listen +9, Spot +9
* Ruin elementals have a +4 racial bonus on Hide checks in areas of ruined stone.
Advancement 15–26 HD (Large); 27–42 HD (Huge)

Immunities (Ex) Ruin elementals take no damage and suffer no impeded movement in the area of a *spike stones* spell.

Rock Throwing (Ex) Like giants, ruin elementals are accomplished rock throwers and have a +1 racial bonus on attack rolls when throwing rocks. A ruin elemental of Large size can hurl rocks weighing up to 50 pounds (Small objects) up to five range increments. A Huge ruin elemental can hurl rocks weighing up to 80 pounds (Medium objects) up to five range increments. The range increment is 150 feet for a ruin elemental's thrown rocks.

Shock Wave (Ex) Every 1d4 rounds, as a swift action, a ruin elemental can strike the ground to create a shock wave in a 20-foot-radius spread centered on itself. All creatures not of the earth subtype within the radius of the shock wave are treated as if bull rushed by the ruin elemental. The ruin elemental receives a +4 bonus on this check from Improved Bull Rush, as well as +4 for each size category it is larger than the targeted opponent. A typical ruin elemental has a +17 bonus on the opposed check against Medium creatures, +21 against Small creatures, and +13 against Large creatures. Creatures that fail the opposed checks are pushed back 5 feet and knocked prone.

Brought into being by ruin chanters (page 132), ruin elementals arise in wasted lands and shattered fortresses. They keep to themselves, avoiding contact with other creatures.

STRATEGIES AND TACTICS

Ruin elementals are passive, patient creatures, but they turn violent when others trespass within the territory they are dedicated to defending. Ruin elementals guarding their lairs are aggressive and virtually impossible to negotiate with, seeing all creatures in the area as threats to be slain or driven away. Only the ruin chanter that created it and those designated as harmless by the ruin chanter can approach a ruin elemental without fear.

When defending their homes, ruin elementals first attempt to take out opponents with volleys of thrown rocks. When foes close to melee range, the elemental meets them with its slam attacks. If fighting multiple foes, a ruin elemental uses its shock wave ability to knock them down. Prone foes likely remain within the creature's reach, but it concentrates on one target before moving on to the rest.

In defense of their lairs and the areas they are sworn to protect, ruin elementals fight to the death.

SAMPLE ENCOUNTERS

Ruin elementals are the servants of ruin chanters. These elementals are called to the Material Plane, and they seldom appear in large numbers.

Masterless Servant (EL 10): A lone ruin elemental lurks within the rubble of a fallen castle. The ruin chanter that created it is long dead, but a doppelganger has a lair nearby. The shapechanger knows which areas of the ruins it can hide in to avoid the elemental's wrath. If the doppelganger observes PCs investigating the area, he poses as the ruin chanter and demands tribute in exchange for ordering "his" guardian to stand down. The doppelganger then flees with the payment (or if his ruse is discovered), leaving the party to face the ruin elemental.

Final Guardians (EL 13): A trio of ruin elementals guards the exit from an ancient dungeon explored by the PCs. When the characters emerge, the elementals hem them in, preventing their exit but keeping them from fleeing back into the place. Unless the PCs drop the loot they took from the dungeon, these guardians attack and fight until destroyed.

ECOLOGY

Ruin elementals reflect the destructive forces of nature and time even as they protect the remains of history. Their ruin

NEW FEAT: BRUTAL THROW

You have learned how to hurl weapons to deadly effect.

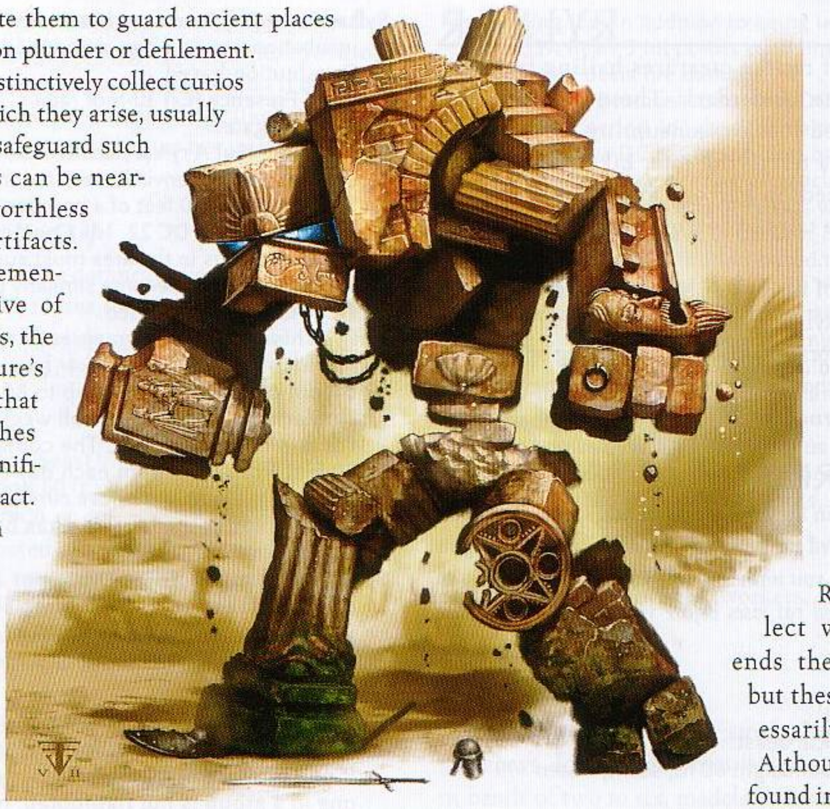
Benefit: You can add your Strength modifier (instead of your Dexterity modifier) to attack rolls with thrown weapons.

Normal: A character attacking with a ranged weapon adds his Dexterity modifier to the attack roll.

Special: A fighter can select Brutal Throw as one of his fighter bonus feats.

chanter masters create them to guard ancient places against those intent on plunder or defilement.

Ruin elementals instinctively collect curios from the ruins in which they arise, usually taking great care to safeguard such objects. These items can be nearly anything from worthless statuary to potent artifacts. Although a ruin elemental is very possessive of the treasure it collects, the surface of the creature's body is so abrasive that most objects it touches and handles suffer significantly from that contact. Mundane items in a ruin elemental's hoard are inevitably damaged by its touch, and they often look like nothing more than junk.



Ruin elemental

Environment: Ruin elementals guard long-abandoned cities, temples, and fortresses in the farthest corners of the world. Trackless deserts, tundra, and other places so inhospitable that their ruins were never resettled are these creatures' homelands.

Typical Physical Characteristics: Ruin elementals are stooped, shambling creatures that stand some 14 feet tall. Their rocky forms weigh about 7,000 pounds. Over time, the rubble from which a ruin elemental is made is ground down by its movement and the friction that movement creates against its surroundings. The oldest ruin elementals look as though they are made of rough gravel and spurs of harder stone.

RUIN ELEMENTAL LORE

Characters who have ranks in Knowledge (the planes) can learn more about ruin elementals. When a character makes a successful skill check, the following lore is revealed, including the information from lower DCs.

Knowledge (the Planes)

DC	Result
20	This monster is a ruin elemental, a creature bound to a particular site of ruin and destruction.
25	Ruin elementals protect the areas they are bound to guard with thrown rocks and vicious slams. They collect the relics of the past, which can be found in their lairs.
30	Ruin elementals produce a devastating shock wave that can knock foes prone. Ruin chanters call ruin elementals forth to protect ancient places from the predations of looters.

Alignment: Ruin elementals care little for the lives of other creatures, and they are typically benign unless they or the areas over which they claim stewardship are threatened. They are usually neutral.

TYPICAL TREASURE

Ruin elementals collect whatever odds and ends they find interesting, but these items are not necessarily valuable or useful. Although they are rarely found in possession of coins, ruin elementals frequently hoard fine weapons and art. These are often worn or damaged in some way because of the creature's abrasive touch, and they are worth their full value only to collectors. Magic items are also commonly found in a ruin elemental's lair, since such objects are more capable of withstanding the ravages of time and the creature's touch. Ruin elementals have half standard treasure for their Challenge Rating, almost all of which is in the form of the aforementioned items.

RUIN ELEMENTALS IN EBERRON

Ruin elementals can be found across Eberron, from the ruins of Xen'drik to the blasted wastes of the Mournland. In the Demon Wastes, ruin elementals are thought to have been created by ruin chanters dedicated to guarding that land against the return of the Lords of Dust. Rumor has it that a ruin chanter has hidden a powerful artifact within territory guarded by his creations—a relic said to be instrumental in the plans of those seeking to free the fiends that were bound at the end of the Age of Demons.

RUIN ELEMENTALS IN FAERÛN

Thought to be little more than legend, ruin elementals are found in the deep deserts and tundra of Faerûn. Within the lairs of the oldest ruin elementals, powerful magic items of Faerûn's past are said to be hidden. Factions of the Zhentarim and the Red Wizards search constantly for such sites, and they pay handsomely for information regarding such locations. They also reward those who thwart others in similar searches.

Illus. by F. Vohwinkel

RYLKAR

Rylkars are a race of ratlike creatures hailing from the upper regions of the Underdark. These monstrosities spread into inhabited locales, consuming all they find and reproducing at a terrifying rate. Like the rats they resemble, rylkars feed on garbage and offal, and their presence spreads the taint of corruption throughout the areas where they lair.

Fire is the source of the rylkar life cycle, and all rylkars are drawn to flame. Rylkar mating rituals typically involve fire-resistant tormentors and madclaws bringing open flame to a rylkar harridan, who then spawns a swarm of new rylkars with this life-giving energy.

RYLKAR HARRIDAN

Vile odors hang heavy in the air even before you spot their source. A massive hulk of matted fur and flesh shudders to life, rolling in its own waste as it fixes you with an eyeless face. What appears to be an enormous, bloated rat rises before you, its tongue flicking from its gaping jaws.

RYLKAR HARRIDAN **CR 9**
Always NE Huge magical beast
Init +2; **Senses** blind, blindsight 60 ft., scent; Listen +19
Languages Undercommon

AC 24, touch 10, flat-footed 22
(–2 size, +2 Dex, +14 natural)
hp 125 (10 HD); regeneration 5; **DR** 10/magic
Immune gaze attacks, illusions, visual effects
Fort +14 (+18 against disease), **Ref** +9, **Will** +5 (+9 against mind-affecting)

Speed 10 ft. (2 squares)
Melee bite +16 (2d6+12/19–20 plus rylkar fever)
Space 15 ft.; **Reach** 10 ft.
Base Atk +10; **Grp** +26
Atk Options Cleave, Improved Sunder, Power Attack, frightful presence, magic strike
Special Actions contaminate, spawn swarm

Abilities Str 26, Dex 15, Con 24, Int 5, Wis 14, Cha 17
SA contaminate, frightful presence, magic strike, rylkar fever, spawn swarm
SQ hive mind
Feats Cleave, Improved Critical (bite), Improved Sunder, Power Attack
Skills Listen +19
Advancement 11–20 HD (Huge); 21–30 HD (Gargantuan)

Blindsight (Ex) A rylkar harridan can sense all foes within 60 feet as a sighted creature would. Beyond that range, she treats all targets as having total concealment. A rylkar harridan is susceptible to sound- and scent-based attacks, however, and is affected normally by loud noises, sonic spells (such as *ghost sound* or *silence*), and overpowering odors (such as *stinking cloud* or incense-heavy air). Negating a harridan's sense of smell or hearing reduces this ability to normal Blind-Fight (as the feat). If both these senses are negated, a rylkar harridan is effectively blinded.

Regeneration (Ex) A rylkar harridan takes normal damage from fire and acid.

Rylkar Fever (Ex) Disease—bite, Fort DC 22 negates, incubation period 1 day, damage 1d6 Con. The save DC is Constitution-based.

Frightful Presence (Ex) 30-foot radius, 10 HD or fewer, Will DC 18 negates.

Contaminate (Su) A rylkar harridan exudes toxins that contaminate the environment around it. Food or drink brought within 20 feet of a harridan becomes foul and poisonous (Fort DC 22, 1d6 Con/1d6 Con) to any but rylkars. Potions in the area must succeed a DC 22 Fortitude save or become similarly poisonous. The save DC is Constitution-based.

This contamination spreads away from a rylkar harridan's lair. Once a rylkar harridan remains in a cavern or dungeon room up to 80 feet on a side, or similar chamber, for one full week, that entire room is contaminated as above. The contamination spreads 20 feet from that room each day the rylkar harridan remains present. A *remove curse* spell cast within the room after the harridan has been killed ends the contamination.

Spawn Swarm (Ex) Three times per day, when a rylkar harridan takes at least 5 points of fire damage from a single source, she can release a rylkspawn swarm into 4 contiguous squares that she occupies or is adjacent to.

Hive Mind (Ex) All rylkars within 10 miles of their harridan are in constant communication, and she with them. If one is aware of a particular danger, they all are. If one in a group is not flat-footed, none of them are. No rylkar in a group is considered flanked unless all of them are.

Skills Rylkar harridans have a +4 racial bonus on Listen checks.

A rylkar harridan is the queen of a rylkar colony. She spends her time rolling in the muck of her surroundings and devouring her madclaw drones with disgusting relish, even as she poisons the area around her with her foul presence.

By the power of fire, all rylkars are born from a harridan, but large numbers of these creatures meet their eventual end inside her gullet. So ravenous are the rylkar harridans that they are known to snatch and devour new broods of young to appease their gnawing hunger.

Strategies and Tactics

If an enemy manages to breach the defenses of a rylkar infestation and reaches the harridan's breeding pit, the rylkar queen rises up in her terrible wrath. Though blind, she homes in on her enemies with blindsight and moves toward her closest opponent. Swollen with corruption and maddened by constant hunger, she uses her prodigious jaws and Improved Sunder feat to shatter her foes' weapons, then uses Power Attack to quickly kill her screaming meals.

A harridan moves to attack any creature carrying fire, whether a torch or a flaming weapon. Though she knows that fire can harm her, she relishes the pain that allows her to create more spawn.

A harridan has little interest in the well-being of other rylkars, and she fights without regard for tactical position. In fact, a harridan's appetite is so voracious that if no opponents stand within immediate reach, she is likely to snatch up and feed on a squirming ally to give her strength for the battle to come.

RYLKAR MADCLAW

A tittering laugh echoes in the darkness, followed by the sound of scrabbling claws. A white rat the size of a dog emerges from the clinging shadows, whiskers twitching as it creeps forward. Then it laughs again as it races to attack.

RYLKAR MADCLAW **CR 3**
Always NE Small magical beast
Init +3; **Senses** darkvision 60 ft.; Listen +10, Spot +7
Languages Undercommon

AC 15, touch 14, flat-footed 12; Dodge
(+1 size, +3 Dex, +1 natural)
hp 26 (4 HD); fire healing
Immune fire
Fort +5 (+9 against disease), **Ref** +7, **Will** +4 (+8 against mind-affecting)

Speed 30 ft. (6 squares), burrow 20 ft., climb 20 ft.
Melee bite +8 (1d4 plus filth fever) and
2 claws +3 each (1d3 plus 1 Con)
Space 5 ft.; **Reach** 5 ft.
Base Atk +4; **Grp** +0
Special Actions mad shriek

Abilities Str 10, Dex 17, Con 13, Int 4, Wis 17, Cha 14
SA filth fever, mad shriek
SQ hive mind
Feats Dodge, Weapon Finesse
Skills Climb +8, Hide +7, Listen +10, Spot +7
Advancement 5–8 HD (Small); 9–12 HD (Medium)

Fire Healing (Ex) In addition to being immune to fire, a madclaw heals 5 hit points each time it is subjected to an attack that deals fire damage.

Filth Fever (Ex) Disease—bite, Fort DC 13 negates, incubation period 1d3 days, damage 1d3 Dex and 1d3 Con. The save DC is Constitution-based.

Mad Shriek (Ex) Once per day, a madclaw can emit a horrible shriek. All creatures except rylkars within 30 feet must make a DC 13 Will save or become *confused* for 1 round. The save DC is Constitution-based.

Hive Mind (Ex) All rylkars within 10 miles of their harridan are in constant communication, and she with them. If one is aware of a particular danger, they all are. If one in a group is not flat-footed, none of them are. No rylkar in a group is considered flanked unless all of them are.

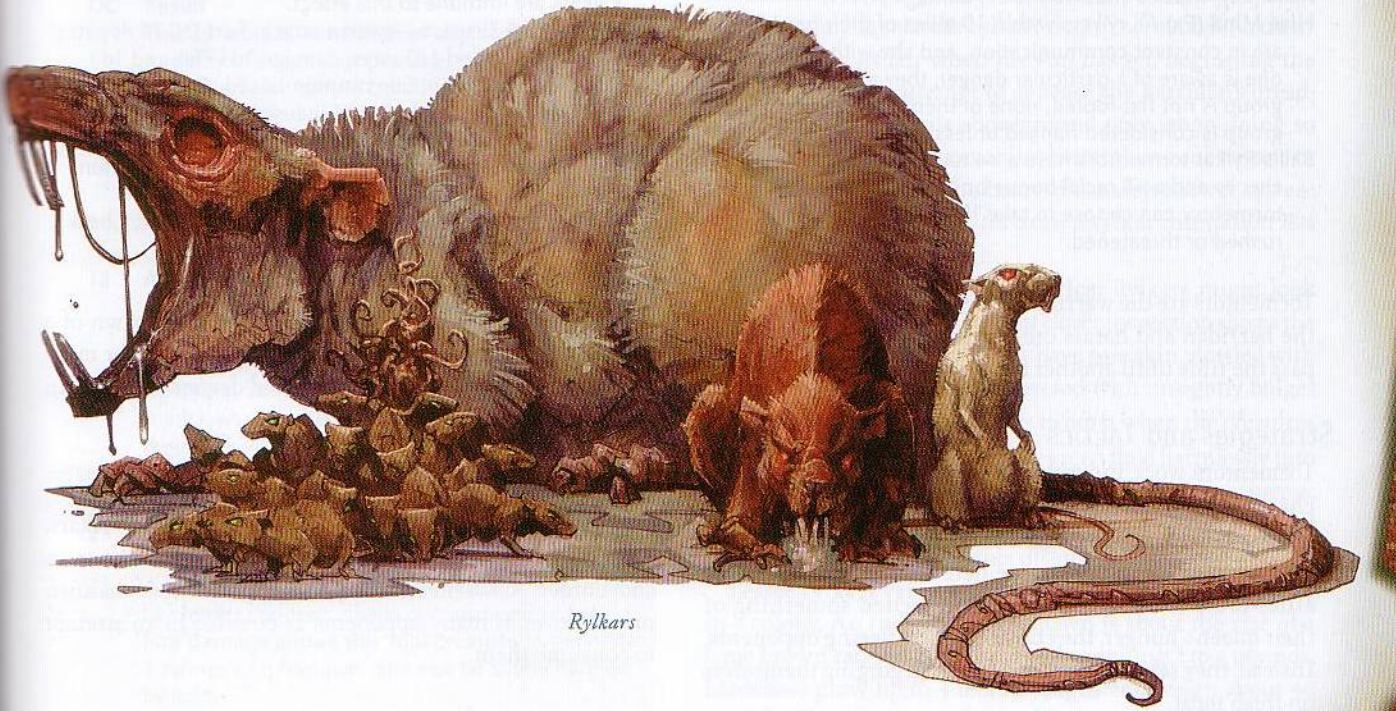
Skills Madclaws have a +4 racial bonus on Listen checks and a +8 racial bonus on Climb checks. A madclaw can choose to take 10 on Climb checks, even if rushed or threatened.

Madclaws are the drones, workers, and battle fodder of a rylkar colony.

Strategies and Tactics

Though they lack the raw strength of rylkar tormentors, madclaws don't shirk when it comes to battle. Gathering in bands of two to six, madclaws can even deter individual tormentors from making a meal out of them. Multiple bands overwhelm foes through superior numbers.

When threatened, a madclaw assumes a defensive posture, using its Dodge feat against the closest enemy. If outnumbered, it uses its mad shriek to confound its opponents and escape. If cornered, a madclaw is a vicious foe, lashing out with its corrupt bite and claws.



Rylkars

Illus. by C. Critchlow

RYLKAR TORMENTOR

A great flabby rat covered in filthy red fur speeds out of the darkness, mouth foaming. Its mad eyes follow your movements as it unleashes a piercing scream.

RYLKAR TORMENTOR CR 6

Always NE Medium magical beast
Init +7; **Senses** darkvision 60 ft.; Listen +10, Spot +6
Languages Undercommon

AC 18, touch 13, flat-footed 15 (+3 Dex, +5 natural)
hp 60 (8 HD); **DR** 5/magic
Resist fire 10
Fort +8 (+12 against disease), **Ref** +9, **Will** +3 (+7 against mind-affecting)

Speed 40 ft. (8 squares), climb 20 ft.
Melee bite +10 (1d6+2 plus filth fever) and 2 claws +8 each (1d4+1)
Space 5 ft.; **Reach** 5 ft.
Base Atk +8; **Grp** +10
Atk Options magic strike, pounce, rake
Special Actions hate shriek

Abilities Str 14, Dex 17, Con 14, Int 5, Wis 12, Cha 10
SA filth fever, hate shriek, magic strike, pounce, rake
SQ hive mind
Feats Improved Initiative, Multiattack, Weapon Finesse
Skills Climb +10, Jump +6, Listen +10, Spot +6, Survival +2
Advancement 9–12 HD (Medium); 13–24 HD (Large)

Filth Fever (Ex) Disease—bite, Fort DC 16 negates, incubation period 1d3 days, damage 1d3 Dex and 1d3 Con. The save DC is Constitution-based.
Hate Shriek (Ex) As a standard action, a tormentor can emit a scream that incites hatred in all madclaws within 30 feet. Madclaws in the area gain a +2 morale bonus on attack rolls and damage rolls for 1 minute.
Pounce (Ex) If a tormentor charges a foe, it can make a full attack, including two rake attacks.
Rake (Ex) Attack bonus +8 melee, damage 1d4+1.
Hive Mind (Ex) All rylkars within 10 miles of their harridan are in constant communication, and she with them. If one is aware of a particular danger, they all are. If one in a group is not flat-footed, none of them are. No rylkar in a group is considered flanked unless all of them are.
Skills Rylkar tormentors have a +4 racial bonus on Listen checks and a +8 racial bonus on Climb checks. A tormentor can choose to take 10 on Climb checks, even if rushed or threatened.

Tormentors are the warriors of a rylkar colony. They protect the harridan and harass other rylkars, murdering them to pass the time until another foe comes along.

Strategies and Tactics

Tormentors work individually or in teams of two to four, charging intruders en masse. They pounce on their enemies, tearing into them with jagged claws and teeth. If supported by madclaws, tormentors use hate shriek to make those allies more formidable. Having inherited something of their queen's hunger, they do not pursue fleeing opponents. Instead, they set upon the dead or dying, gorging themselves on fresh meat.

RYLKSPAWN SWARM

You catch a whiff of a foul stench as a knot of squirming rats surges out of the darkness. Gleaming green eyes seek you out as uncountable sleek brown bodies writhe, their tails seemingly entwined in one great knot.

RYLKSPAWN SWARM CR 4

Always NE Tiny magical beast (swarm)
Init +10; **Senses** darkvision 60 ft.; Listen +9, Spot +5
Aura terror musk (10 ft.)
Languages understands Undercommon

AC 18, touch 18, flat-footed 12 (+2 size, +6 Dex)
hp 45 (7 HD)
Immune fire, swarm immunities
Resist half damage from piercing and slashing
Fort +6 (+10 against disease), **Ref** +11, **Will** +3 (+7 against mind-affecting)
Weakness swarm vulnerabilities

Speed 20 ft. (4 squares), climb 10 ft.
Melee swarm (2d6 plus 1 Con plus filth fever)
Space 10 ft.; **Reach** 0 ft.
Base Atk +7; **Grp** —
Atk Options distraction

Abilities Str 5, Dex 22, Con 13, Int 1, Wis 13, Cha 8
SA distraction, filth fever, terror musk
SQ swarm traits
Feats Ability Focus (distraction), Improved Initiative, Stealthy
Skills Climb +5, Hide +14, Listen +9, Move Silently +8, Spot +5
Advancement 8–14 HD (Tiny)

Terror Musk (Ex) At the end of a rylkspawn swarm's turn, creatures within 10 feet of it must make a DC 16 Will save or become shaken for 1 round. The save DC is Constitution-based and includes a +2 racial bonus. A creature that successfully saves cannot be affected again by that same rylkspawn swarm's musk for 24 hours. Rylkars are immune to this effect.
Filth Fever (Ex) Disease—swarm attack, Fort DC 14 negates, incubation period 1d3 days, damage 1d3 Dex and 1d3 Con. The save DC is Constitution-based.
Distraction (Ex) Fortitude DC 14, nauseated 1 round. The save DC is Constitution-based.
Skills Rylkspawn swarms have a +4 racial bonus on Listen checks and a +8 racial bonus on Climb checks. A rylkspawn swarm can choose to take 10 on Climb checks, even if rushed or threatened.

A rylkspawn swarm is made up of the massed spawn of a rylkar harridan. A swarm numbers three hundred or more individual rylkspawn that roll over and devour anything in their path.

Strategies and Tactics

Though individual rylkspawn are the least of the rylkars, a swarm of these creatures can strip a foe to the bone in short order. A swarm attacks in a straightforward manner, moving over as many opponents as possible in an attempt to consume them.

SAMPLE ENCOUNTERS

Rylkar colonies arise as infestations, and rylkars defend the colony and its harridan to the bitter end. Creatures encountered singly or in small numbers should be close to a larger lair, and a rylkar infestation can and probably should serve as the backbone of an adventure.

An infestation of rylkars might take hold in a city's sewers, growing in size and danger as these creatures feed their insatiable hunger. Alternatively, a colony might establish itself in proximity to an important location in the Underdark, feasting on subterranean travelers or the leavings of other predators.

Scavengers (EL 7): Three rylkspawn swarms prowl the tunnels of a city sewer. Even when seeking morsels with which to stuff themselves, they search for fire to present to the harridan. When the PCs cross their path, the rylkspawn swarms seize the opportunity to feed.

The Doomed (EL 8–10): In a rare moment of desperate self-preservation, a group of six madclaws attempts to escape a failing colony, knowing that the harridan will devour them all before the end. As the madclaws flee through the Underdark, a group of three tormentors pursues them, with the PCs caught in the middle.

Queen of Filth (EL 13): In the center of a rylkar infestation stands the lair of the harridan. This foul chamber holds the rylkar queen herself, as well as the four tormentors and eight madclaws attending her.

RYLKAR LORE

Characters who have ranks in Knowledge (arcana) can learn more about rylkars. When a character makes a successful skill check, the following lore is revealed, including the information from lower DCs.

Knowledge (Arcana)

DC	Result
13	This creature is a member of a rylkar infestation—a colony of evil ratlike creatures native to the Underdark. A creature called a madclaw is the most common rylkar. This result reveals all magical beast traits.
14	Rylkar young mass in teeming swarms that can strip a creature to the bone in a matter of seconds.
16	The skittering tormentors are the warriors of the rylkars, protecting the colony and its queen.
18	A blind and bloated harridan rules a rylkar colony. She and her offspring spread disease with their bites. They all have dense hides that are particularly resistant to attacks with mundane weapons. Some are also resistant to fire. Rylkar madclaws can unleash a scream that confuses their foes.
19	Rylkspawn swarms give off a foul stench that strikes fear into enemies.
21	Rylkar tormentors emit a shriek that can bolster their madclaw kin.
28	A rylkar harridan regenerates damage, but unlike her lesser children, she is not immune to fire. Fire damage allows this foul creature to generate a swarm of rylkspawn. She can be safely harmed by acid.

ECOLOGY

A rylkar colony has a ravenous appetite. When a rylkar infestation takes hold, rylkspawn swarms swiftly destroy the local ecosystem, slaughtering native creatures and stripping plants bare. Before long, the area around the colony is devoid of life, forcing the rylkars to range farther and farther for survival. Eventually, the gathering of more food in the vicinity becomes impossible, and the infestation must move on or die.

Once a rylkar colony takes hold, tormentors set out to find sources of fire. By bringing these back to the harridan, the tormentors help the colony expand its numbers to forage in a wider range. For their service and devotion, tormentors are often eaten after the harridan has given birth to a new rylkspawn swarm.

As a swarm matures, its members eat each other and anything else consumable in the area. The survivors emerge as warrior tormentors and madclaw drones. The most numerous rylkars inside a colony are the madclaws, and tormentors are more common outside the colony. Occasionally, a rylkspawn swarm includes a nascent harridan. If this creature can act quickly and eat enough of the swarm to survive, it is carried off by madclaws under tormentor escort, eventually founding a new colony far from the old.

Rylkars blindly attack any creatures they encounter, just as other creatures usually attack a rylkar on sight. Animals instinctively sense the corruption inherent in rylkars, and they either attempt to drive the rylkars off or immediately flee.

Environment: Though they have no special antipathy to light, rylkars prefer to hole up in underground environments. In addition to keeping them hidden from potential predators, underground life suits the rylkars' nocturnal nature. A colony emerges from its lair when the sun has set, beginning the night's hunt in an attempt to appease the harridan's dreadful hunger. Rylkars lair aboveground only when doing so protects them from their enemies better than a subterranean lair could. Whether in the heart of a massive sewer system or the ruins of an ancient fortress, a rylkar infestation is a noxious and deadly scourge.

Typical Physical Characteristics: Rylkars might look like giant rats from a distance, but closer inspection shows the similarity to be superficial. They have pale skin mottled with thin patchy fur. Their skin is covered with unsightly bulges and tumors that have a tendency to burst when the creatures are active, spraying streams of pale green fluid harmlessly into the air. This expulsion appears to cause the rylkars no distress, however, and they chitter happily at the patterns produced on walls and foes alike by this disgusting display.

Lesser rylkars vary in size, depending on their purpose in a colony. An individual rylkspawn is about the size of a large brown rat, 1 to 2 feet long and weighing 2 to 4 pounds. Madclaws grow up to 4 feet in length and weigh about 40 pounds. They are covered in pale white fur and have pink or red eyes. The larger and stronger tormentors can grow to 8 feet long and weigh upward of 400 pounds. They have matted red fur and black eyes.

Harridans dwarf all other members of the colony. These creatures can grow to 30 feet in length and sixteen tons in weight. Though they bear a passing resemblance to enormous bloated rats, their bodies bristle with clumps of filth-encrusted black fur. Great swaths of their skin are bare, pocked with scabrous tumors and old rupture scars. A harridan's head is more mouth than anything else. Rylkar tormentors tear a harridan's eyes out as soon as she is discovered among a swarm, possibly in the hope of preventing her from feasting on her own kind. If so, this scheme seldom works.

Alignment: Although a rylkar colony can have the appearance of a regimented society, rylkars are self-serving in the extreme. A colony's dedication to its harridan is absolute, but madclaws and tormentors are intelligent enough to defend themselves from the appetite of the harridan and her voracious swarms. Without exception, rylkars are neutral evil.

SOCIETY

Rylkars are vicious and rapacious. Thoroughly malevolent, they are concerned only with the rampant destruction through which they feed their endless hunger. Rylkar colonies avoid quick collapse into chaos only by the rigidly defined roles of their hierarchy. Under a social structure similar to that of ants or bees, members of the colony are assigned particular functions based on their capabilities.

At the bottom of the hierarchy are the mewling rylkspawn, which live only to eat and grow. They cannot reproduce and have little individual will.

Above the rylkspawn swarms stand the madclaws that serve as the harridan's consorts. Savage and self-centered, they have an inflated sense of their own purpose, seeing their relationship to the harridan as a sign of power. This belief doesn't end even when the harridan snatches up a madclaw and stuffs it into her cavernous maw.

Tormentors are the warriors of a colony, charged with protecting the harridan and her breeding chamber. This responsibility makes them arrogant, and they believe they have the right of life and death over any other colony member. Gluttony and hubris inspire tormentors to devour squirming rylkspawn and madclaws alike, though they prefer to kill and eat other creatures.

At the head of the infestation is the grotesque harridan herself. This queen of the colony is a blind, vile behemoth whose life is spent eating and breeding. The pampering she receives from her madclaw drones inflates her cruel and selfish nature—harridans are famed for their fickleness and wickedness.

SAMPLE LAIR: RYLKAR WARRENS

The sewers of a small city have recently been overrun by an infestation of rylkars. Though the citizens of the town are not yet aware of the danger, signs of the infestation are growing. People have begun to fall ill, pets and children have gone missing, and an especially foul stench rises from the sewers.

The network of sewers beneath the town consists of 10-foot wide channels, each running parallel to a major thoroughfare above. Branching off from these main routes are secondary sewers that are 5 feet wide. These drain debris, rubbish, and effluvia out to a nearby river as it flows south. The walls throughout are masonry over excavated earth, and they feature no ledges. Characters navigating these passages must do so in the polluted water of the sewers.

The entire area depicted on the map has been fouled by the harridan's contaminate ability.

1. Sewers (EL 4): The area depicted is a single stretch of sewer located anywhere in the city. The water is slow-moving, too shallow to swim but too deep to walk through unimpeded. Each square of the sewer costs 2 squares to enter. Due to the sounds of dripping and running water, characters take a –2 penalty on Listen checks when in these sewer tunnels.

This area is home to two rat swarms that have managed to elude the ravenous rylkars. The swarms are drawn to the sound of movement.

2 *Rat Swarms:* hp 13 each; *MM* 239.

2. Entrance (EL 6): At the entrance to the rylkar warren, chunks of slimy masonry emerge like rotten teeth from the sluggish flow of the sewer water. Perched on one rock is a common brown rat that scampers off if anyone approaches.

Guarding this area is a single tormentor. It is focused on eating a sheepdog, so it takes a –4 penalty on Listen checks to notice the PCs' approach. If it hears the PCs, the tormentor presses against the wall, leaping out to attack any creature that comes within 5 feet.

3. Hall of Bones (EL 6): This large chamber has been excavated by swarming rylkspawn. The stench here is overwhelming, and the floor is littered with chewed bones and rotting offal. Footing in this area is bad—the DC of Balance and Tumble checks increases by 2.

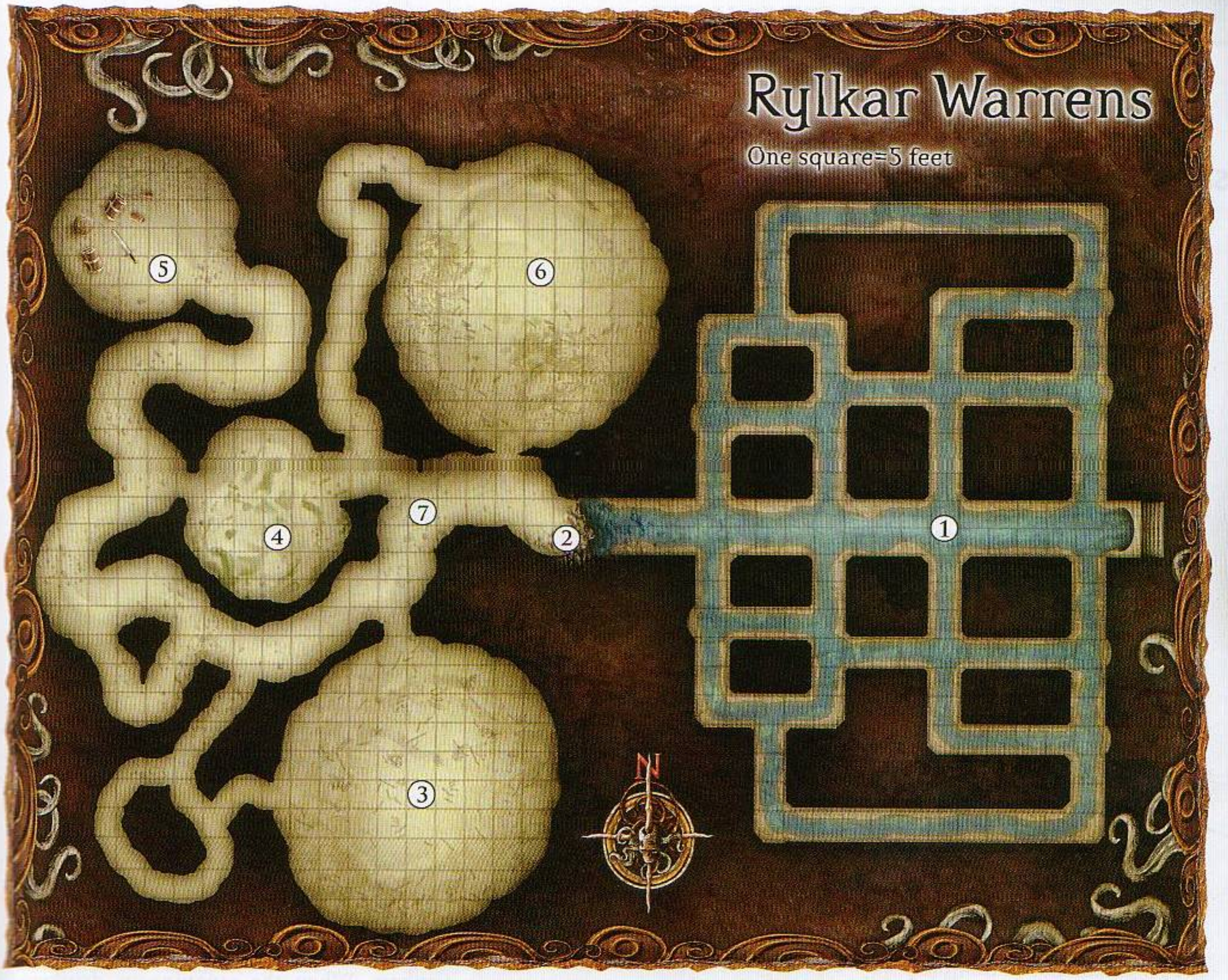
Hiding in the muck are two rylkspawn swarms. When any character moves into the room, the swarms attack.

4. Madclaw Nest (EL 7): This chamber is foul with excrement and slime. The colony's madclaws lair here, and four are here at any one time. They attack any nonrylkar that enters this area.

5. Harridan Horror (EL 10): The colony's harridan languishes here in her own filth. Protecting her are two tormentors that attack anyone who threatens their queen. This room also holds the colony's treasure.

6. Rylkspawn Swarm Nests (EL 6): The odor of this room is particularly repulsive. Cast-off bits of cloth and rubbish litter the floor, serving as a nest. Two rylkspawn swarms are here.

7. Tunnels (EL 5): Two groups of two rylkar madclaws work at excavating these tunnels so the colony can grow. Insert a single encounter with two madclaws at a couple of points during the PCs' exploration.



TYPICAL TREASURE

Though rylkars have little use for treasure, they collect what they obtain from their victims. Rylkars are particularly attracted to shiny objects, and their hoards contain coins, gems, metalwork, and magic items. Tormentors, madclaws, and rylkspawn have no treasure, since all rylkars give valuables they find to the harridan. Her lair contains triple standard treasure for her Challenge Rating.

RYLKARS IN EBERRON

Supposedly created by and enslaved to the goblinoids of the Dhakaani Empire, rylkars lived and died at the whim of their cruel masters. Hobgoblin lords pitted rylkar warriors against one another in spectacular blood matches. Those that did not fight for the entertainment of their masters slaved away in the mines.

Goblinoid legends tell of a bloody rylkar uprising that raged for years during the war against the daelkyr. Battles were costly, but in the end, the rylkars won their freedom. They fled into the depths of Khyber.

Today, these ancient accounts are seldom given credence, but reports have described deadly encounters with colonies of ratlike creatures deep beneath the earth. Adding credibility to these tales, goblinoid priests in Darguun have recently begun to make blood sacrifices, reportedly for protection against a foul presence growing in the darkness beneath the earth.

RYLKARS IN FAERÛN

The upheaval that was the result of Lolth's silence rippled outward from the drow cities, with the violence that spilled from these enclaves plunging other cultures into chaos. Countless creatures fled the rebellion, descending deeper into the earth or drifting upward in the hope of escaping the attention of the followers of the dread Revenancer.

Among these displaced creatures were the rylkars. Previously unknown to any but the most well-traveled Underdark explorers, these monstrosities exploded from the subterranean depths to find new homes in the sewers below surface cities. Sightings of new infestations have been reported from Waterdeep to Cormyr, and across the land, adventurers have rallied to fight this new threat.

Though colonies are destroyed as quickly as they establish themselves, the rylkars have shown great adaptability and cunning. Whether pushing into the wilderness or creating lairs that can be actively defended within ancient ruins, this scourge continues to spread.

SANGUINEOUS DRINKER

This gore-spattered skeletal figure moves with great speed. Blood-soaked organs glisten and swing within its rib cage like water skins. Its arms end in jagged, bloody claws.

Sanguineous Drinker **CR 5**
Always CE Medium undead
Init +6; **Senses** darkvision 60 ft.; Listen +8, Spot +10
Languages one language spoken in life or by creator

AC 16, touch 12, flat-footed 14
(+2 Dex, +4 natural)
hp 75 (10 HD)
Immune undead immunities
Fort +3, **Ref** +7, **Will** +7

Speed 40 ft. (8 squares)
Melee 2 claws +8 each (1d4+3 plus blood drain)
Space 5 ft.; **Reach** 5 ft.
Base Atk +5; **Grp** +8
Atk Options Combat Reflexes
Special Actions blood spray

Abilities Str 16, Dex 15, Con —, Int 7, Wis 10, Cha 14
SA blood drain, blood spray
SQ undead traits
Feats Combat Reflexes, Improved Initiative, Improved Toughness, Lightning Reflexes
Skills Balance +10, Listen +8, Spot +10
Advancement 11–20 HD (Large); 21–30 HD (Huge)

Blood Drain (Su) A sanguineous drinker's claws are hollow, enabling it to drain blood from a living victim. Living creatures damaged by a claw attack also take 1 point of Constitution damage. Each time a sanguineous drinker deals 1 point of Constitution damage, it heals 5 points of damage as its organs swell with blood.

Blood Spray (Su) As a swift action, a sanguineous drinker can deal itself 5 points of damage to spray blood from the organs in its torso. This has the same effect as the area version of the *grease* spell (Reflex DC 17), but the area is centered on the sanguineous drinker. The slippery conditions created by the spray persist for 1 minute. The save DC is Charisma-based.

Sanguineous drinkers never need to make Reflex saves against blood spray, but they do need to make Balance checks to move.

Blood spray does not stack with the effect of a *grease* spell or similar effects. The effect that has the highest Reflex save DC takes precedence.

Sanguineous drinkers are skeletal undead intent on draining the blood of any creature they encounter.

STRATEGIES AND TACTICS

A sanguineous drinker quickly closes to melee with its opponents, getting in among them if possible. Once in position, a sanguineous drinker uses blood spray to affect the surrounding area. Subsequently, it uses Combat Reflexes to attack any opponent standing up from prone. Whenever possible it uses a full attack, concentrating on a single foe.

SAMPLE ENCOUNTERS

The abodes of sanguineous drinkers contain blood and corpses, making them attractive to vermin. Those who hunt these undead often encounter swarms of insects before battling the sanguineous drinker itself. A sanguineous drinker attacks any living creatures entering its domain, stopping only when it or the invaders are dead.

Occasionally, small packs of three to nine individuals form in areas of intense death and suffering.

Sanguineous drinkers often fight alongside other intelligent undead—particularly vampires—that value their ferocity and lust for blood. Necromancers and cunning undead spellcasters create sanguineous drinkers to serve as guards, sometimes placing them among weaker undead to reduce the efficacy of an enemy cleric's turn undead ability.

A Deadly Plunge (EL 6): A single sanguineous drinker lurks in a grotto 40 feet up the wall of a natural cavern. The grotto is accessible along a narrow ledge. Using its blood spray and full attacks to knock opponents to the floor of the greater cavern, the sanguineous drinker attacks anyone it spots moving along the ledge. Even if it doesn't sense intruders soon enough to attack those on the ledge, the sanguineous drinker can rely on the centipedes in its lair to swarm and attack approaching living creatures.

Blood Pack (EL 9): A vampire fighter (*MM* 251) stalks the darkened streets on the bad side of town, accompanied by two sanguineous drinkers. The vampire flies ahead of his companions in bat form, and once he spots explorers, he summons bat swarms to conceal the approach of the sanguineous drinkers. When the sanguineous drinkers attack, the vampire reverts to his normal shape and slams an obvious servant of a good deity, using energy drain against

SANGUINEOUS DRINKER LORE

Characters who have ranks in Knowledge (religion) can learn more about sanguineous drinkers. When a character makes a successful skill check, the following lore is revealed, including the information from lower DCs.

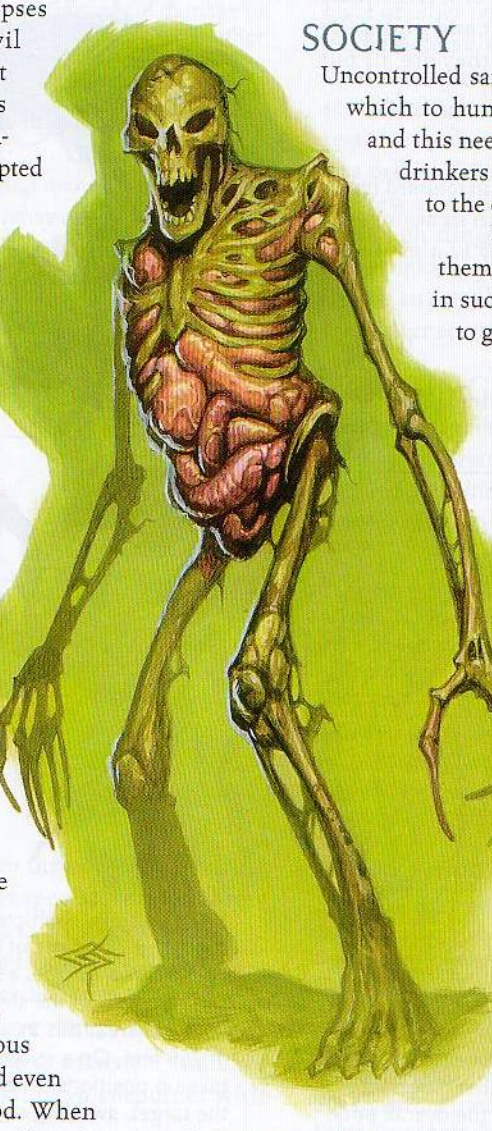
Knowledge (Religion)

DC	Result
15	This creature is a sanguineous drinker, a type of skeletal undead commonly used by intelligent undead and necromancers as soldiers. They have quick reflexes and prefer to concentrate their attacks on a single foe.
20	Sanguineous drinkers use their hollow claws to drain the blood of living creatures.
25	These creatures can store the blood in their wasted organs, later using it to spray the floor with a bloody slick that can cause falls and impair movement.

that foe. The sanguineous drinkers flank another foe, using blood spray only to prevent their prey from retreating.

ECOLOGY

Sanguineous drinkers are not natural creatures. Necromancers create them from corpses boiled in blood. Particularly evil and bloodthirsty creatures might spontaneously rise as sanguineous drinkers if they die in an environment soiled with blood and corrupted by negative energy.



Sanguineous drinker

Illus. by S. Prescott

Environment: Sanguineous drinkers lurk on battlefields or in places used for ritual sacrifice. They haunt unholy locales, thirsting for blood. Although sunlight does not harm sanguineous drinkers, they avoid its brilliance, preferring to lurk inside or underground. Some prowl fetid caverns heavy with the stench of death, while others inhabit abandoned and isolated ruins that have a history of bloody slaughter.

Their lairs take several forms but typically have at least two entrances, which sanguineous drinkers don't bother to hide. Blood cakes the area around such access points, and the interior is stacked with eviscerated and bloodless corpses that frequently attract large numbers of vermin. The sanguineous drinkers coat the walls, floors, and even the ceilings of their lairs in blood. When their bloodlust overcomes them and no alternative source of blood is available, they consume these deposits.

Typical Physical Characteristics: Sanguineous drinkers are humanoid in form and usually human-sized. Larger specimens exist, created from the remains of a larger creature.

A typical sanguineous drinker resembles a partially decomposed and skeletal member of its original race, except that it has clawed hands and feet. It drains blood through those hollow claws, storing the fluid in its shriveled organs. A fibrous mass of connective tissue connects the organs to the sanguineous drinker's ribs. Despite leaking from thousands of tiny perforations, the organs swell as more blood is pumped into them.

Alignment: Sanguineous drinkers are corrupt and depraved killers with an inborn hatred for living creatures and a supernatural lust for blood. They lack compassion, and they enjoy toying with their victims, inflicting as much torment as possible. These creatures are always chaotic evil.

SOCIETY

Uncontrolled sanguineous drinkers claim a small area in which to hunt. They thirst for blood from the living, and this need drives them above all else. Sanguineous drinkers know nothing of mercy or fear. They fight to the death.

Sanguineous drinkers don't fight among themselves, even over territory, seeing no gain in such clashes. Instead, they either form packs to gain more blood or disperse to ensure good hunting for all. When a pack forms, the oldest or most powerful sanguineous drinker rules the group, using its underlings as pawns to entrap or lure living creatures.

Sanguineous drinkers speak one language, which is normally Common. A sanguineous drinker's creator can specify a different language when creating the creature, but he must speak that language. Although sanguineous drinkers can speak, they rarely do so—and they never negotiate with their prey—but in combat, they howl with excitement. Communication among a pack of such creatures is limited to the expression of commands and the reports of subordinates.

TYPICAL TREASURE

In addition to their insatiable lust for blood, sanguineous drinkers have an obsessive desire to collect implements used in committing violence. In particular, sanguineous drinkers gather weapons and armor, especially those items still gory from the battlefield. Their lairs are crammed with armaments of all descriptions, most of which are rusted and useless. Masterwork weapons and armor, as well as the occasional magic item, are mixed in among this trash.

A sanguineous drinker has standard treasure for its Challenge Rating. The bulk of this treasure is in the form of valuable weapons or similar items.

FOR PLAYER CHARACTERS

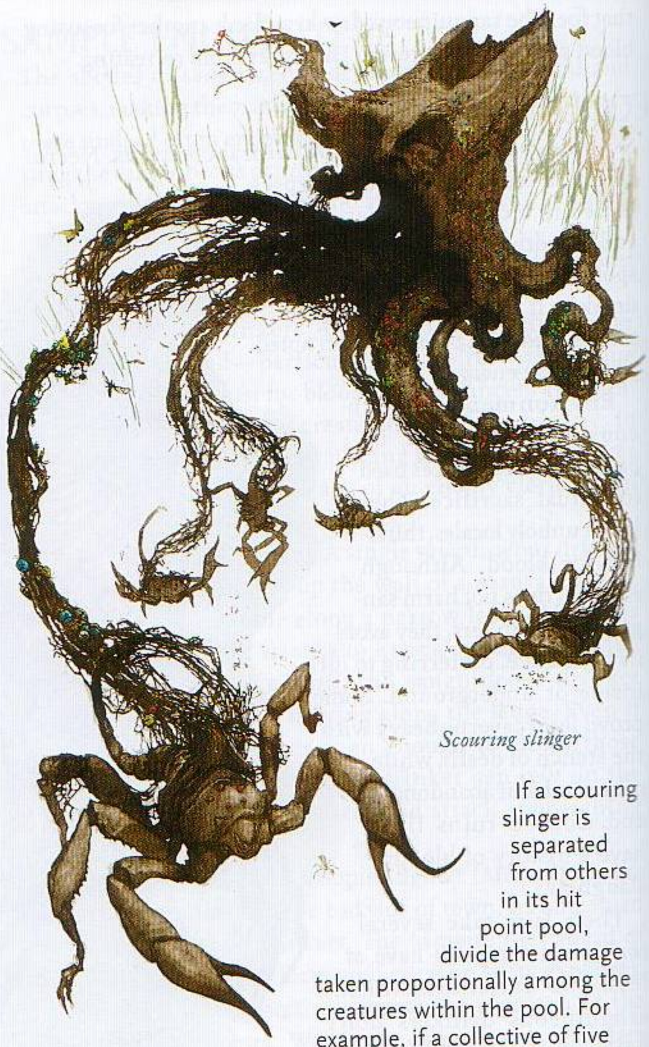
A spellcaster of 15th level or higher can use the *create undead* spell to animate a sanguineous drinker.

SCOURING CONSTRUCT

Scouring constructs are the creations of druids bent on defending the natural world from the predations of civilization at any cost. Built to stand against the strongest foes, scouring constructs are the products of secret rituals and powerful magic. Working in concert and under the control of the druids who create them, they are all but unstoppable.

SCOURING SLINGER

This massive tangle of branches and roots is surrounded by a swarming mass of insects. It rises up and extrudes six arms from its central mass, each holding what appears to be a construct scorpion some 4 feet long.



Scouring slinger

Illus. by A. Waters

SCOURING SLINGER **CR 18**

Always N Huge construct

Init +4; **Senses** darkvision 60 ft., low-light vision; Listen –3, Spot –3

Languages understands controller's orders

AC 35, touch 12, flat-footed 31
(–2 size, +4 Dex, +23 natural)

hp 271 (42 HD); collective health

Immune construct immunities

SR 27

Fort +14, **Ref** +18, **Will** +11

Speed 30 ft. (6 squares)

Melee slam +37 (1d8+12)

Space 15 ft.; **Reach** 10 ft.

Base Atk +31; **Grp** +47

Special Actions scorpion throw

Abilities Str 26, Dex 18, Con —, Int —, Wis 4, Cha 4

SA scorpion throw

SQ construct traits

Feats —

Skills Listen –3, Spot –3

Advancement 43–60 HD (Huge); 61–84 HD (Gargantuan)

Collective Health (Su) A scouring slinger within 100 feet of another scouring slinger or a scouring stanchion shares a single pool of hit points. This pool is the sum of the hit points from all creatures that have the collective health ability and are within 100 feet of each other. Subtract any damage taken by one creature from the overall pool. No creature that has collective health is destroyed until the pool reaches 0 hit points, at which time all creatures sharing the pool are destroyed simultaneously.

If a scouring slinger is separated from others in its hit point pool, divide the damage taken proportionally among the creatures within the pool. For example, if a collective of five stanchions and slingers has lost 100 hit points, each creature that separates from the pool has taken 20 points of damage.

Scorpion Throw (Ex) As a standard action, a scouring slinger can throw six of the slinger scorpions that are grown from its body. Treat this as a ranged touch attack with a range of 250 feet. On a successful attack, the slinger scorpions take up positions in squares surrounding and adjacent to the target, avoiding squares that are already occupied. If the attack misses, the slinger scorpions take up positions around a square 2d4 squares away from the target in a random direction.

SCOURING INSECTS

The collective health ability of a group of scouring constructs is manifested in the large insects constantly swarming around these creatures. These insects are a part of a scouring construct's being, and they are laced with the supernatural essence of its collective health ability.

Individual insects are fragile, and any melee attack directed against the swarm automatically kills 2d8 of these Diminutive creatures. Spells such as *fireball* can destroy all the insects in a wide area. However, a scouring construct can create as many replacement insects as it needs as an immediate action. The insects ignore other creatures, and characters fighting within the cloud suffer no adverse effect.

A character who succeeds on a DC 15 Spot check notices that a cloud of insects never swarms more than 50 feet from a lone construct. This knowledge might inspire PCs to try to force constructs to move more than 100 feet apart, negating their collective health ability.

Slinger scorpions cannot attack in the round in which they are launched, but they are not flat-footed. The scorpion throw itself deals no damage to the target creature.

Once its first set of slinger scorpions is deployed, a scouring slinger can create up to six more as a move action. However, the slinger takes 10 points of damage for each scorpion it creates. If it is within 100 feet of another scouring slinger or scouring stanchion, this damage is taken from the collective health pool as normal.

Slinger Scorpion

This scorpionlike construct has four legs and a longer arm tipped with a blade. Its head hangs slightly below and in front of its body, featureless except for five eyes set in a circular pattern.

Slinger Scorpion CR —

Always N Small construct
Init +4; **Senses** darkvision 60 ft., low-light vision; Listen –4, Spot –4
Languages —

AC 30, touch 15, flat-footed 26
(+1 size, +4 Dex, +15 natural)
hp 5 (1 HD)
Immune construct immunities
Fort +14, **Ref** +18, **Will** +10

Speed 20 ft. (4 squares)
Melee claw blade +32 (2d8)
Space 5 ft.; **Reach** 5 ft.
Base Atk +31; **Grp** –4

Abilities Str 10, Dex 18, Con —, Int —, Wis 3, Cha 4
Feats —
Skills Hide +8, Listen –4, Spot –4
Advancement —

Slinger scorpions are grown from the body of a scouring slinger and launched as part of its special scorpion throw attack. They use the scouring slinger's Hit Dice to determine their base attack bonus and saving throws.

Independent slinger scorpions fall to pieces after 24 hours or when the scouring slinger that created them is destroyed. They are not independent monsters and have no Challenge Rating; they are part of an encounter with a scouring slinger.

Strategies and Tactics

If an opponent comes within melee range, a scouring slinger uses its slam attack. Otherwise, scouring slingers attack primarily with their scorpion throw, harrying foes at a distance. Against large numbers of opponents, scouring slingers target characters on the fringe of the group, allowing their slinger scorpions to focus on individual targets without being flanked themselves. Against smaller groups, scouring slingers launch their slinger scorpions to surround as many foes as possible.

Spells that deal damage even on a successful save are the best means of destroying slinger scorpions. As such, a scouring slinger targets characters lacking armor first, hoping to take out enemy mages. If a particular opponent demonstrates an ability to destroy slinger scorpions easily, the scouring slinger does not target that foe with subsequent scorpion throw attacks. Similarly, any opponent who consistently avoids the slinger scorpions' attacks is eventually ignored in favor of other targets.

These default strategies can be altered if an intelligent creature is directing the scouring slinger's attacks. Slinger scorpions are effective at slowing adversaries down and restricting their movement. As such, intelligent controllers order them to ignore characters with low mobility and few attacks.

Though slinger scorpions can move to flank opponents, they employ little strategy beyond attacking foes as directed. Even if an intelligent creature controls the scouring slinger, the slinger scorpions' tactics cannot be improved.

SCOURING STANCHION

An immense trunk of gnarled wood towers above you, a host of shining insects swarming across its body. As the tower lumbers toward you, arcs of multicolored energy flash between the tiny creatures teeming on and around it.

Scouring Stanchion CR 18

Always N Huge construct
Init +0; **Senses** darkvision 60 ft., low-light vision; Listen +0, Spot +0
Languages understands controller's orders

AC 38, touch 28, flat-footed 38
(–2 size, +20 deflection, +10 natural)
hp 325 (30 HD); collective health
Immune construct immunities
SR 27
Fort +16, **Ref** +16, **Will** +16

Speed 30 ft. (6 squares); unstoppable movement
Melee 2 slams +32 each (2d6+12 plus 2d6 nonlethal)
Space 15 ft.; **Reach** 15 ft.
Base Atk +22; **Grp** +42
Atk Options Awesome Blow

Abilities Str 34, Dex 10, Con —, Int —, Wis 10, Cha 19
SA unstoppable movement
SQ construct traits, structural integrity
Feats Awesome Blow^{B}
Skills Listen +0, Spot +0
Advancement 31–40 HD (Huge); 41–60 HD (Gargantuan)

Collective Health (Su) As the scouring slinger.
Saving Throws (Ex) Scouring stanchions have a +6 racial bonus on saving throws (included in the creature's statistics).
Unstoppable Movement (Ex) Scouring stanchions can attempt to overrun as a free action when moving. They have a +4 racial bonus on Strength checks made to overrun, so a typical scouring stanchion has a +24 bonus on the opposed Strength check. Targets cannot choose to avoid a scouring stanchion's overrun attempt.
Structural Integrity (Ex) The supernatural energy binding a scouring stanchion's body together makes it tougher than it would normally be. It adds its Charisma modifier as bonus hit points to each Hit Die.

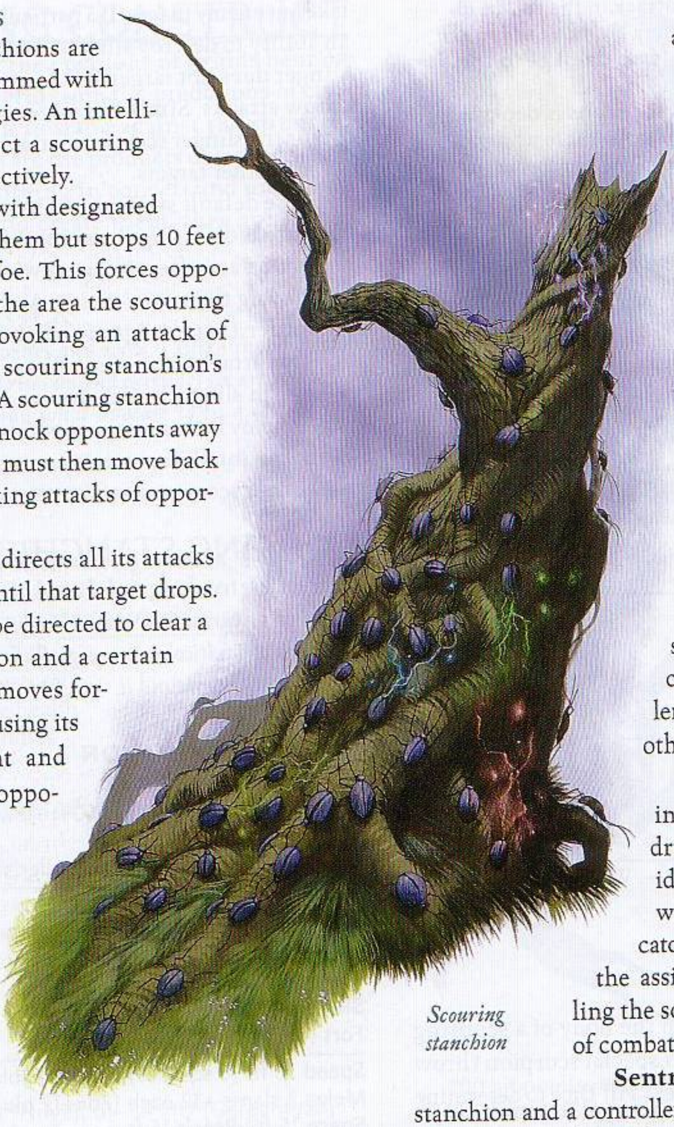
Strategies and Tactics

Although scouring stanchions are mindless, they are programmed with advanced combat strategies. An intelligent controller can direct a scouring stanchion even more effectively.

A scouring stanchion with designated enemies moves toward them but stops 10 feet away from the nearest foe. This forces opponents to move through the area the scouring stanchion threatens, provoking an attack of opportunity even as the scouring stanchion's reach allows it to attack. A scouring stanchion uses Awesome Blow to knock opponents away from it. Those opponents must then move back into range (likely provoking attacks of opportunity) to attack again.

A scouring stanchion directs all its attacks against a single target until that target drops. The construct can also be directed to clear a path between its location and a certain point. If so ordered, it moves forward in a straight line, using its unstoppable movement and melee attacks to clear opponents out of the way.

Though weak opponents can be slain by a single slam attack, a scouring stanchion often leaves stronger opponents alive. Its programming forces it to stop attacking when a target falls unconscious from nonlethal damage, though an intelligent controller can order the construct to finish off fallen foes.



Scouring stanchion

Illus. by W. England

SAMPLE ENCOUNTERS

Scouring slingers and scouring stanchions usually have an intelligent controller guiding them. This controller (usually the druid who created the construct or a creature in that druid's service) stays hidden, deploying the powerful constructs to keep combatants well away from him. A single controller can direct the actions of up to three scouring constructs as a full-round action, directing a single scouring construct as a standard action.

Scouring stanchions are sometimes set as guards for potent magical locations in the wilderness, but they are more commonly used as the vanguard of druid-led armies. Scouring stanchions are strong enough to break down wooden palisades and stone walls, and they can clear a path through nearly any opposing force.

Because scouring stanchions and scouring slingers are constructed through similar processes, they are often created at the same time. Their combat styles complement each other, with a scouring stanchion taking on massed melee forces while scouring slingers use their scorpion throw against targets outside the main group.

Both kinds of constructs obey their creator and any other intelligent creature their creator orders them to obey. The constructs' creator can regain sole control as a free action. Scouring stanchions and scouring slingers understand any commands spoken by their controllers, but they do not respond to any other creatures.

Sentinel (EL 18): A lone scouring slinger guards an approach to a druid's tree house abode. The druid's assistant is also present, but PCs who time their attack carefully can catch him by surprise. If they do so, the assistant is prevented from controlling the scouring slinger for the first round of combat.

Sentry (EL 18): A single scouring stanchion and a controller have instructions to stop anyone trying to pass through a sacred grove. If all intruders are rendered unconscious, the construct's controller takes them prisoner.

Artillery Unit (EL 21): Three scouring slingers and a single controller work together as an assault force. The constructs throw slinger scorpions to pin opponents down, then wade in with their slam attacks.

Strike Team (EL 21): A scouring slinger provides artillery support to two scouring stanchions, with the whole group directed by a druid serving the powerful druid who created the constructs. The controller stays well away from combat, but if he is taken out, the constructs lose the ability to coordinate their assault.

ECOLOGY

As constructs, scouring slingers and scouring stanchions have no place in the natural world. A scouring slinger given defensive orders and a generous definition of "enemy" can lay waste to a substantial number of creatures but these constructs are passive until used in battle. Likewise, a scouring stanchion directed to destroy (or simply given badly worded orders) can devastate a wide swath of territory.

Environment: Scouring slingers and scouring stanchions can survive in almost any environment, and they are found wherever their creators order them. Both kinds of constructs operate best in a wide area, however, and are only rarely found in the confined spaces of castles, fortresses, and cities. Scouring slingers are not commonly used underground, since their scorpion throw becomes limited by the 60-foot range of their darkvision. Scouring stanchions can be found underground, and they function perfectly well underwater.

Typical Physical Characteristics: Scouring slingers resemble the shambling mounds from which they are created, but they are larger and composed of desiccated vegetation. Essentially amorphous, a scouring slinger can grow limbs as it needs them, then reabsorb them into its body. These creatures are vaguely bipedal, standing 20 feet tall and weighing twelve tons.

Scouring stanchions resemble nothing so much as a massive, gnarled tree trunk. They stand 25 feet tall and weigh fifteen tons.

The insects that swarm on and around a scouring construct are oversized, clearly supernatural, and in constant motion. Their movement is marked by faint arcs of multicolored energy that jump from bug to bug.

Alignment: As mindless automatons, scouring slingers and scouring stanchions are always neutral.

SCOURING CONSTRUCT LORE

Characters who have ranks in Knowledge (arcana) or Knowledge (nature) can learn more about scouring constructs. When a character makes a successful skill check, the following lore is revealed, including the information from lower DCs.

Knowledge (Arcana) or Knowledge (Nature)

DC	Result
28	This plantlike creature is a scouring construct, an artificial being created by druid magic. Its body is covered by a layer of swarming insects.
33	Two kinds of scouring constructs exist. Scouring slingers are primarily ranged attackers, throwing smaller construct creatures grown from their own bodies. Scouring stanchions are powerful melee combatants, and they can use their tremendous strength to knock foes prone or smash defensive structures.
38	Two or more scouring constructs within 100 feet of each other are able to share any damage dealt to them individually. Scouring constructs fighting in concert must all be destroyed before any fall. The swarming insects are the source of this collective health.

TYPICAL TREASURE

Scouring constructs have no interest in treasure. Their controllers carry standard treasure for their Challenge Rating, usually in the form of weapons and magic items.

FOR PLAYER CHARACTERS

High-level druids, employing closely guarded magic rituals, create scouring slingers and scouring stanchions. A scouring slinger grows slinger scorpions, and these smaller constructs cannot be created independently.

Scouring Slinger Construction: The secret druidic ritual for creating a scouring slinger involves the initial creation of three shambling mounds that are incorporated into the creature's construction.

CL 18th; Craft Construct, *creeping doom, shambler;* Price 117,000 gp; Cost 58,500 gp + 3,000 XP.

Scouring Stanchion Construction: The secret druidic ritual for creating a scouring stanchion requires the participation of a treant willing to sacrifice its life to become the construct. A druid must make a DC 25 Craft (woodcarving) check after one day of working to inscribe special runes in the treant's trunk.

CL 18th; Craft Construct, *creeping doom, animate plants;* Price 105,000 gp; Cost 52,500 gp + 3,000 XP.

Variants: Larger scouring slingers and scouring stanchions can be constructed. Each additional Hit Die adds 500 gp to the cost. Repairing a scouring construct follows the normal rules for repairing constructs (see the Craft Construct feat, *MM* 303).

SCOURING CONSTRUCTS IN EBERRON

In Khorvaire, scouring constructs are a creation of the Ashbound, and the druids of this militant sect are the only ones who know the secret of such magical construction. On the fringes of the Towering Wood, whole settlements have been wiped from the map. Terrified survivors speak of rapacious plant creatures and scorpionlike terrors with a thirst for blood. The folk of neighboring settlements are fleeing the Reaches in droves, but what the Ashbound's ultimate goals are, none can say.

SCOURING CONSTRUCTS IN FAERÛN

Scouring constructs are a part of the legendary history of Faerûn, spoken of in tales dating back to the last Crown Wars. The secret of the creation of these constructs (if indeed they were ever anything more than legend) has been lost for millennia. Recently, however, tales of dark rites twisting the forces of nature have emerged from the Chondalwood and the Forest of Lethyr. Explorers and settlers pushing deep into those realms have returned with harrowing tales of attacks by invulnerable plant creatures.

SHAEDLING

A short, humanlike creature with raven skin and equally dark eyes flutters on fine wings like those of a dragonfly. Its lower abdomen is distended. Two spinnerets there exude wisps of thick darkness as the creature zips by, leaving a trail of shadow in its wake.

SHAEDLING **CR 2**

Always CE Medium fey
Init +4; **Senses** darkvision 60 ft., low-light vision; Listen +4, Spot +4
Languages Common, Sylvan

AC 15, touch 14, flat-footed 11
(+4 Dex, +1 buckler)
hp 22 (4 HD); **DR** 5/cold iron
Fort +3, **Ref** +8, **Will** +5

Speed 30 ft. (6 squares), fly 60 ft. (good)
Melee spiked chain +6 (2d4)
Ranged bolas +6 (1d4 nonlethal) or
Ranged javelin +6 (1d6)
Space 5 ft.; **Reach** 5 ft. (10 ft. with spiked chain)
Base Atk +2; **Grp** +2
Atk Options Combat Reflexes, Point Blank Shot, shadow gossamer, sleeping curse, wall of darkness

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Abilities Str 10, Dex 18, Con 15, Int 13, Wis 13, Cha 16
SA shadow gossamer, sleeping curse, wall of darkness
Feats Combat Reflexes, Point Blank Shot, Weapon Finesse
Skills Appraise +1 (+3 weapons), Bluff +10, Craft (weaponsmithing) +8, Diplomacy +5, Escape Artist +11 (+13 ropes), Hide +11, Intimidate +6, Listen +4, Move Silently +11, Spot +4, Use Rope +11
Advancement by character class; **Favored Class** rogue
Possessions shadow gossamer buckler

Shadow Gossamer (Ex) As a swift action, a shaedling can generate a 15-pound or lighter item out of shadow gossamer, and it usually crafts a weapon just before attacking. A shaedling is proficient with any weapon it creates from shadow gossamer, and such weapons have a range increment 10 feet longer than usual. Shields constructed of this substance have their armor check penalty lessened by 1. Shadow gossamer implements dissipate to nothingness if they leave the hands of a shaedling for longer than 1 round.

Sleeping Curse (Su) Once per day, a shaedling can target an opponent within 30 feet with a special javelin of venomous shadow gossamer. A foe struck by this javelin must succeed on a DC 15 Fortitude save or fall asleep for 1d6 rounds. A *remove curse* spell ends this effect. The save DC is Charisma-based.

Wall of Darkness (Su) Once per day, a shaedling can generate a wall of darkness up to 30 feet long. The wall blocks line of sight for all creatures except those that have darkvision.

Shaedlings are malignant fey that have turned their back on nature in favor of the Spider Queen, Lolth.

STRATEGIES AND TACTICS

A shaedling attacks from above and at range, hovering and throwing shadow gossamer weapons. It uses its sleeping curse immediately to take out the creature among its foes that seems the weakest. If it can, it uses a wall of darkness to cordon the combat zone to its liking.

In a group, shaedlings use walls of darkness to divide their foes and control the battlefield. They divide into two attack formations. One formation flies high above, throwing javelins, while the second group hovers 10 feet above the enemy, attacking with spiked chains. The shaedlings using chains try their best to harry foes that can attack the throwers.

SAMPLE ENCOUNTERS

Shaedlings prefer the tactical superiority that numbers provide. When caught alone, a shaedling has a particular task or goal, which it completes, fleeing afterward.

Dark Raider (EL 2): A shaedling that was left behind by its kin when it overslept hurries to catch up. It hasn't had a good meal in 24 hours, so it raids the PCs' camp to snatch a backpack or sack and make off with some food. If it can kill a mortal in the process, all the better.

Retrieval Crew (EL 9): A banshrae (page 10) with four shaedlings in tow pursues the PCs. It seems their dark mistress wants a treasure the characters acquired on their last adventure, and she won't take no for an answer. In fact, if the banshrae has its way, she'll get her treasure and the heads of a few mortals to boot.

ECOLOGY

Shaedlings' origins are linked to the same schism that drove elves and drow apart. A small number of pixies followed the drow in their reverence for Lolth, but they didn't follow the drow underground. The Queen of the Demonweb Pits blessed these pixies to become a terror in the places other fey and elves love best. She gave them their ability to weave shadow as spiders weave webs.

SHAEDLING LORE

Characters who have ranks in Knowledge (nature) can learn more about shaedlings. When a character makes a successful skill check, the following lore is revealed, including the information from lower DCs.

Knowledge (Nature)

DC	Result
12	This creature is a shaedling, a hateful fey with command over shadow. This result reveals all fey traits.
17	The spinnerets on a shaedling's belly allow it to form weapons and other implements from shadowy strands. A shaedling can also weave a wall of shadow to block sight.
22	Shaedlings can use a special javelin to put a creature and, potentially, all who touch that creature to sleep. Their tough skin is best cut by cold iron.

Like drow, shaedlings are a true race. Their transformation made them bigger and stronger than normal pixies, and largely incompatible with any other sprite. They can't mate with their good-aligned kin.

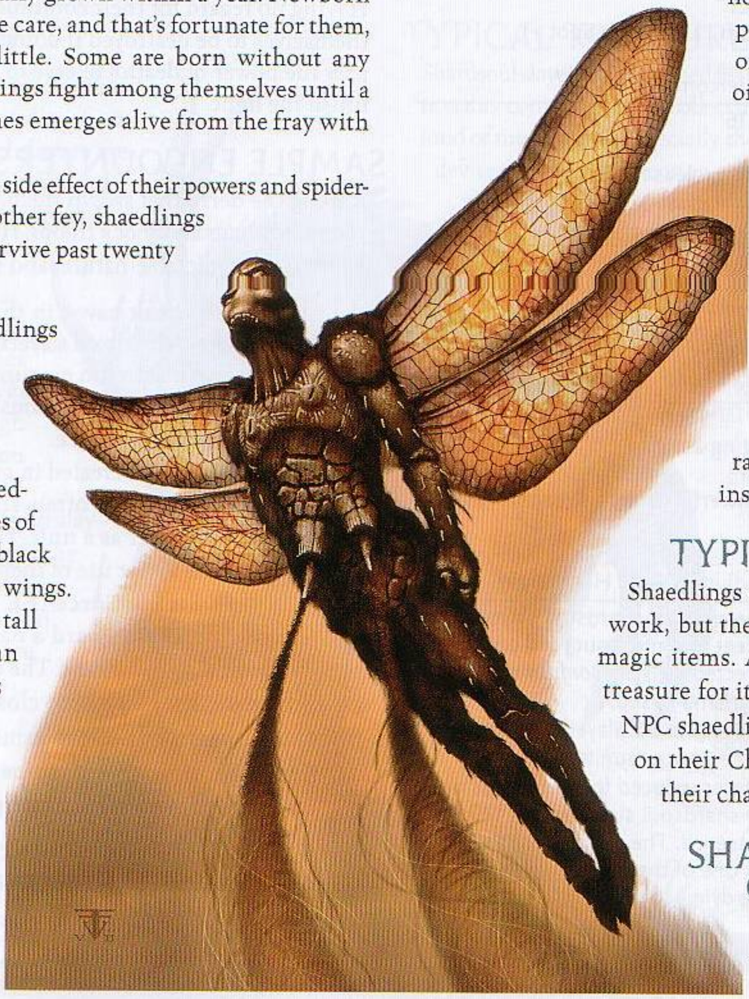
However, they do produce shaedling offspring, and prolifically. Female and male shaedlings couple wantonly, and the females lay eggs. These eggs hatch within a month, and infant shaedlings are fully grown within a year. Newborn shaedlings require little care, and that's fortunate for them, because they receive little. Some are born without any guardian, and such siblings fight among themselves until a pack of the toughest ones emerges alive from the fray with a clear leader.

Shaedlings do suffer a side effect of their powers and spiderlike life cycle. Unlike other fey, shaedlings have short lives. Few survive past twenty years of age.

Environment: Shaedlings prefer temperate forests where other fey and elves live.

Typical Physical Characteristics: Shaedlings resemble drow elves of short stature with solid black eyes and dark dragonfly wings. They stand about 4 feet tall and weigh no more than 80 pounds. Spinnerets sprout from their stomachs, allowing them to weave shadow gossamer—a light, tensile substance stronger than a spider's webbing.

Alignment: These pernicious fey enjoy causing suffering and bedlam. Whenever they can, they torment and kill those unfortunate enough to wander into their territory, working the scene so that others are blamed. Shaedlings are born chaotic evil.



Shaedling

SOCIETY

Shaedlings have a society the way a group of brigands might be said to have a culture. The strongest creatures lead, and the weak submit or die. A shaedling band produces nothing aside from momentarily useful implements of shadow gossamer. Whatever else they need, they kill or steal to obtain.

These fey do have an affinity for other evil arachnid creatures, as well as monstrous spiders. When they can, shaedlings live among or near evil araneas, ettercaps, and even driders.

Other fey usually shun these vile creatures, if they don't kill them on sight. Malevolent nymphs and degenerate verdant princes sometimes welcome shaedlings into corrupt fey courts. In such cases, shaedlings serve as spies, assassins, and burglars, overseen by another more powerful evil fey such as a banshrae.

Shaedlings serve only in hope of being offered the opportunity to wreak mayhem on communities of humanoid races. They respect only displays of power and creatures capable of destroying them. Their limited life span makes them short-sighted.

That trait, coupled with their evil nature, makes them especially wasteful and greedy, as well as prone to fits of rage if their whims are not instantly gratified.

TYPICAL TREASURE

Shaedlings disdain clothing and artwork, but they enjoy shiny baubles and magic items. A shaedling has standard treasure for its Challenge Rating. Elite NPC shaedlings have equipment based on their Challenge Rating instead of their character level.

SHAEDLINGS WITH CLASS LEVELS

Shaedlings don't have the discipline to pursue classes that require commitment and concentration, but they are crafty and versatile. They usually advance as rogues, becoming sneaky and highly skilled, but a few have natural talent as sorcerers. Rogue is considered an associated class, but sorcerer is not.

Level Adjustment: +3.

SHAEDLINGS IN EBERRON

Shaedlings originated in Xen'drik, where the legendary Qabalrin (*Secrets of Xen'drik* 52) created them during the Age of Giants. Xen'drik's shaedlings aren't always evil, but they frequently ally with evil creatures, and large numbers of them serve drow tribes as scouts.

Whispers in Sharn's Lower City suggest that a terrible Daask assassin called Vil'yas is some sort of dark sprite. Perhaps Vil'yas is a shaedling.

Illus. by F. Vohwinkel

SHARDSOUL SLAYER

Humanoid in shape, this lithe and angular creature has a body of smooth blue-gray metal. Its joints flare to jagged edges, and the overlapping armor plates that wrap it create the appearance of a slender weapon waiting to strike.

SHARDSOUL SLAYER **CR 5**

Usually CE Medium construct
Init +6; **Senses** darkvision 60 ft.; Listen +0, Spot +1
Aura disorienting (5 ft.)
Languages understands Undercommon

AC 18, touch 12, flat-footed 16
(+2 Dex, +6 natural)
hp 53 (6 HD); **DR** 3/—; death's release
Immune construct immunities
Fort +2, **Ref** +6, **Will** –2

Speed 30 ft. (6 squares)
Melee 2 slams +9 each (1d6+4 plus 1 Wis)
Space 5 ft.; **Reach** 5 ft.
Base Atk +4; **Grp** +8
Atk Options Powerful Charge

Abilities Str 18, Dex 14, Con —, Int 6, Wis 3, Cha 8
SA death's release, disorienting aura
SQ construct traits
Feats Improved Initiative, Powerful Charge, Weapon Focus (slam)
Skills Listen +0, Spot +1
Advancement 7–11 HD (Medium); 12–16 HD (Large)

Disorienting Aura (Su) At the end of a shardsoul slayer's turn, creatures within 5 feet of it must succeed on a DC 12 Will save or be affected by *lesser confusion,* as the spell. The save DC is Charisma-based.

Death's Release (Su) When a shardsoul slayer is destroyed, its fragment of elemental essence reunites another fragment. A shardsoul slayer reduced to 0 hit points or fewer can select another shardsoul slayer within 120 feet to receive its unbound essence. The recipient shardsoul slayer immediately gains one of the following effects for 2 rounds, as chosen by the dying construct.

Haste, as the spell.

+2 enhancement bonus on attack rolls and damage rolls.

+2 enhancement bonus to AC and on saving throws.

Once a shardsoul slayer uses this ability, it becomes inert and cannot be repaired or reanimated. However, its raw materials can be used in the construction of more shardsoul slayers, reducing the cost of the process by 500 gp (see For Player Characters).

Shardsoul slayers are created through a process that splinters a single elemental spirit, binding it into a number of construct bodies. This fragmentation pushes the elemental spirit to the brink of madness, and a shardsoul slayer suffuses that madness into the world around it.

Some suggest that the shardsoul slayers were created in the image of their derro masters. Others believe that the derro are themselves too mad to understand how dangerously insane their creations are. Whatever the case, a shardsoul slayer is a lethal and unpredictable weapon.

STRATEGIES AND TACTICS

The products of a harrowing creation, shardsoul slayers spread their madness to as many other creatures as possible. Shardsoul slayers use Powerful Charge whenever possible, caring little that the AC penalty imposed by a charge only hastens their demise. They focus their attacks on single targets, piling on Wisdom damage to disorient that creature. Having no regard for their continued existence, they allow themselves to be destroyed if doing so means being able to pass the power of death's release to another slayer who can finish the fight.

SAMPLE ENCOUNTERS

Among the derro that spawn them, shardsoul slayers act as vanguard scouts and shock troops. However, these constructs have an unpredictable nature, and more than a few escape their masters to wreak havoc in the world at large. Left to their own devices, shardsoul slayers find an area where they can generate the maximum amount of chaos and violence. As such, they are drawn to populous settlements, both in the Underdark and on the surface.

These constructs are created in groups of three, and they rarely appear alone. More often, shardsoul slayers created together stay together as a unit. The derro split them up, however, to make better use of them.

Underdark Strike Force (EL 7): Two derro (*MM* 49) and a shardsoul slayer guard a narrow pass near a derro settlement in the Underdark. The shardsoul slayer presses any intruders, keeping them close in the cramped confines of the passage to affect as many as possible with its disorienting aura. The derro snipe from the shadows with poisoned crossbow bolts, using their *daze* and *sound burst*

SHARDSOUL SLAYER LORE

Characters who have ranks in Knowledge (arcana) can learn more about shardsoul slayers. When a character makes a successful skill check, the following lore is revealed, including the information from lower DCs.

Knowledge (Arcana)

DC	Result
15	This creature is a shardsoul slayer, a dangerously insane and brutal construct.
20	The attack of a shardsoul slayer affects body and mind, dulling the instincts of even the most steadfast warriors.
25	Engaging a shardsoul slayer in melee combat is a risk. The creatures' insanity is said to spread to those who stray too close.
30	Destroying a shardsoul slayer in the vicinity of another of its kind is a short-lived victory. The death of one slayer can grant another slayer increased killing power.

abilities on foes whose will is weakened by the shardsoul slayer's attacks.

Maddened Slaughter (EL 9): Four shardsoul slayers killed their derro creator and fled the Underdark for a small city on the surface. There, the constructs wreak murderous havoc in the busy streets, trusting in their disorienting aura to *confuse* attackers and keep a crowd of addled noncombatants between them and danger.

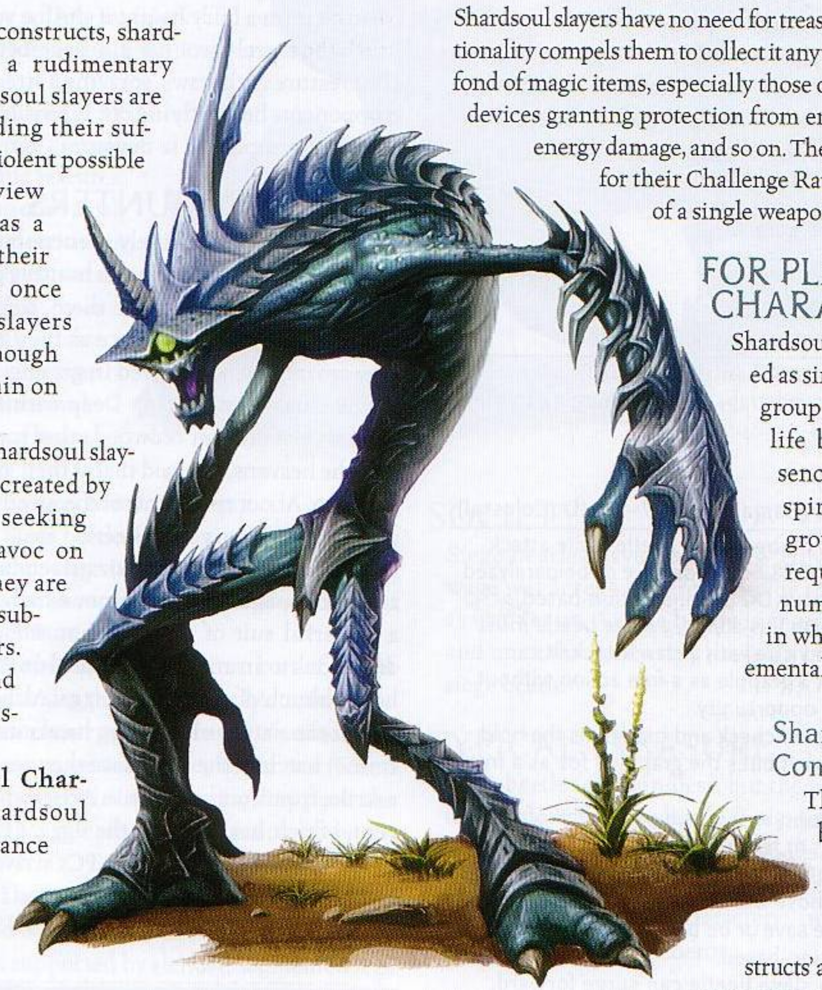
ECOLOGY

Unlike most other constructs, shardsoul slayers have a rudimentary intelligence. Shardsoul slayers are dedicated to spreading their suffering in the most violent possible way. Though they view their destruction as a means of reuniting their elemental essence once more, shardsoul slayers yearn to live long enough to inflict terrible pain on others.

Environment: Shardsoul slayers were originally created by derro spellcasters seeking to unleash pure havoc on their enemies, so they are most often found in subterranean derro lairs. They can be found anywhere their masters send them.

Typical Physical Characteristics: A shardsoul slayer has an appearance as fragmented as the essence bound within it. Its metal limbs are lean and angular, creating a haphazard but deadly appearance. Armor plating makes up the majority of its body, but a smoother "skin" of blue alloy is visible at the joints. A typical shardsoul slayer stands 5 feet tall and weighs 300 pounds.

Alignment: A shardsoul slayer's capriciousness and lust for violence are its only consistent features. Shardsoul slayers are usually chaotic evil, capable of any act their form allows. The best among them are chaotic neutral—unpredictable but not quite as bloodthirsty. Such shardsoul slayers are created by less wicked creatures than the derro.



Shardsoul slayer

Illus. by J. Zhang

SOCIETY

Shardsoul slayers have no innate social order, and those controlled by the derro or others do as their masters bid them. However, when escaped slayers come across each other, they are drawn to live and fight as a unit. Once so bound, shardsoul slayers can be separated only by the destruction that frees their essence.

TYPICAL TREASURE

Shardsoul slayers have no need for treasure, but their chaotic irrationality compels them to collect it anyway. They are particularly fond of magic items, especially those of an elemental nature—devices granting protection from energy, weapons that deal energy damage, and so on. They have standard treasure for their Challenge Rating, usually in the form of a single weapon or magic item.

FOR PLAYER CHARACTERS

Shardsoul slayers are never created as single creatures. Rather, a group of three slayers is given life by the fragmented essence of a single elemental spirit. Each crafting of a group of shardsoul slayers requires the creation of a number of distinct bodies in which the shards of the elemental spirit are to reside.

Shardsoul Slayer Construction

Three shardsoul slayer bodies must be created from specially prepared alloys worth 1,500 gp. The constructs' armored forms are forged in a process requiring three days and a single successful DC 15 Craft (armorsmithing) check. As each body is smelted and poured, the molten metal is blended with quicksilver, then slowly cooled. This quicksilver costs 500 gp.

The creator then calls and binds an elemental spirit from the Elemental Plane of Earth. A finely crafted crystal prism worth 1,000 gp must be used in the fragmenting of the elemental spirit. This prism is consumed at the time of creation, cracked and dulled by the process.

CL 9th; Craft Construct, *animate objects, lesser planar binding, shatter,* caster must be at least 9th level; Price 70,000 gp; Cost 41,000 gp + 2,800 XP. This process creates three shardsoul slayers.

SIEGE BEETLE

The loud buzz of whipping wings fills the air as a tremendous insect swoops down upon you. Its massive forelegs violently flail and its great, curved mandibles glisten with a strange liquid.

SIEGE BEETLE **CR 16**
Always N Gargantuan vermin (extraplanar)
Init +0; **Senses** darkvision 60 ft.; Listen +0, Spot +0
Languages —

AC 33, touch 6, flat-footed 33
(–4 size, +27 natural)
hp 250 (20 HD); **DR** 15/piercing
Immune electricity, sonic, vermin immunities
Resist cold 10, fire 10
Fort +20, **Ref** +6, **Will** +6

Speed 40 ft. (8 squares); fly 50 ft. (clumsy)
Melee 2 claws +26 each (2d8+15) and
bite +24 (2d6+7 plus paralysis)
Space 30 ft.; **Reach** 20 ft.
Base Atk +15; **Grp** +42
Atk Options improved grab
Special Actions blinding musk, surging trample

Abilities Str 40, Dex 10, Con 27, Int —, Wis 10, Cha 9
SA blinding musk, improved grab, paralysis, surging trample
SQ vermin traits
Feats —
Skills Listen +0, Spot +0
Advancement 21–26 HD (Gargantuan); 27–35 HD (Colossal)

Paralysis (Ex) A creature hit by a siege beetle's bite attack must succeed on a DC 28 Fortitude save or be paralyzed for 1d6 rounds. The save DC is Constitution-based.

Improved Grab (Ex) To use this ability, a siege beetle must hit an opponent of any size with a claw attack. It can then attempt to start a grapple as a free action without provoking attacks of opportunity.

If it wins the grapple check and maintains the hold during the next round, it bites the grappled foe as a free action.

Blinding Musk (Ex) As soon as it is reduced to half of its full normal hit points or fewer, a siege beetle sprays opponents with a 60-foot cone of blinding musk as an immediate action. Those within the cone must succeed on a DC 28 Fortitude save or be blinded for 1 minute. The save DC is Constitution-based.

Surging Trample (Ex) A siege beetle can surge forward, flattening and demolishing everything in its path. Targets in the siege beetle's path take 2d6+22 points of damage, and they are also pushed in front of the siege beetle to the extent of its movement. A creature in the beetle's path can choose to either make a DC 35 Reflex save to move out of the way, or attempt an attack of opportunity, taking the effect of the trample if the attack does not kill the siege beetle. The save DC is Strength-based.

Siege beetles are massive, carnivorous insects from the plane of Acheron. They are voracious and feed on the refuse scattered upon the massive battlefields on that plane. These insects see living creatures as mobile and tasty meals.

STRATEGIES AND TACTICS

Siege beetles attack fearlessly, swooping down on potential prey and trampling. They follow up by slashing with their scythe-shaped forelimbs, and they grab struck foes. Once a siege beetle successfully grabs an opponent, it bites that enemy as soon as it can, causing paralysis. It seeks a new target as soon as a foe succumbs.

If the target (or its allies) proves to be resilient or bothersome, the siege beetle flies off with its prey. It drops that creature from a lofty height if the foe still resists.

When severely wounded, a siege beetle turns defensive. The creature withdraws, spraying a stream of blinding musk at opponents before flying off. If possible, it tries to carry off at least one opponent to devour.

SAMPLE ENCOUNTERS

Adventurers are most likely to encounter a siege beetle after entering the territorial insect's hunting grounds. Fortunately for those who would battle them, siege beetles are just as hostile to others of their race as they are to their prey, and they are rarely encountered in groups.

The Guardian (EL 16): Deep within an immense forest is a grove of ancient redwoods that tower hundreds of feet into the heavens. It is said that at their apex, a portal opens to Acheron. About two-thirds of the way up is lair of the portal's guardian, a hungry siege beetle.

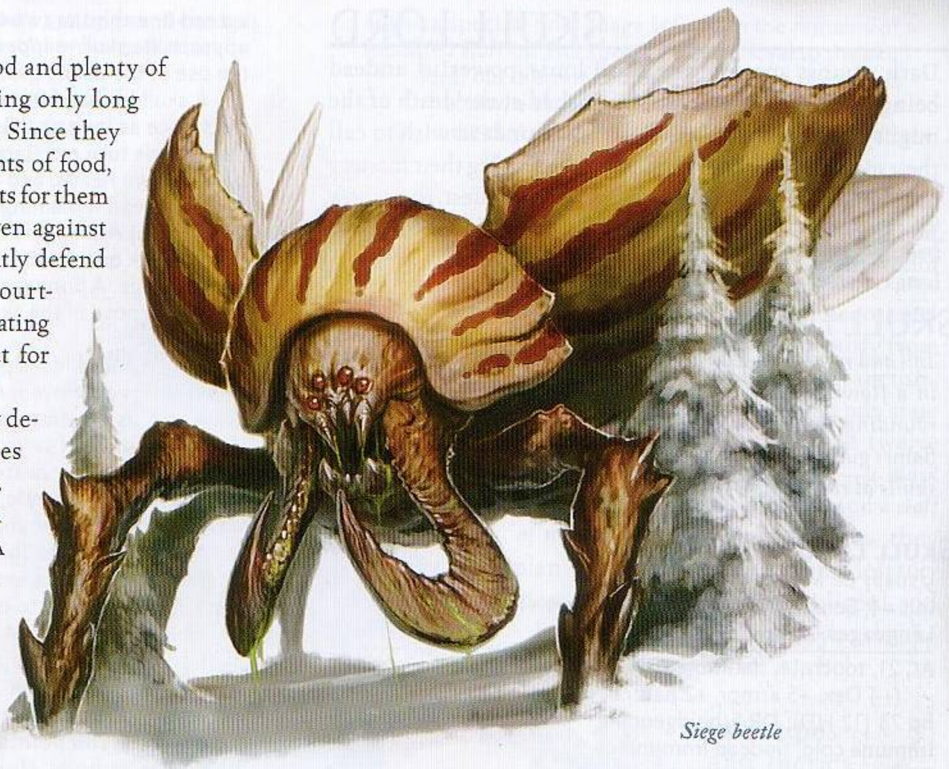
Hatchlings (EL 20): A wizard sends the PCs on a quest to recover a special material from which he promises to craft a powerful suit of magic armor. He gives the characters directions to an ancient battlefield on Acheron that is said to hold a clutch of siege beetle eggs. Although he informs the PCs of the nature of the eggs, he assures them that the eggs cannot hatch in the cold place they are located in. However, a strike from another cube in Acheron opened a geothermal vent, which has warmed the eggs, causing them to hatch prematurely. By the time the PCs arrive, the eggs are empty, and four siege beetles are looking for a fresh meal.

SIEGE BEETLE LORE

Characters who have ranks in Knowledge (the planes) can learn more about siege beetles. When a character makes a successful skill check, the following lore is revealed, including the information from lower DCs.

Knowledge (the Planes)

DC	Result
26	This is a siege beetle, an enormous insect from the plane of Acheron. It is particularly weak against piercing weapons, and its chitin is useful for crafting armor.
31	Siege beetles have paralytic bites. Of the forms of energy, only acid is fully effective against them.
36	Siege beetles spray a blinding musk when they are severely wounded.



Siege beetle

Illus. by J. Chan

ECOLOGY

Siege beetles require ample food and plenty of space to survive. They stop eating only long enough to molt and reproduce. Since they must consume immense amounts of food, the availability of suitable habitats for them is limited. Fiercely territorial even against others of their kind, they violently defend their hunting grounds. Only courtship scents released by willing mating partners can quell this instinct for a time.

Siege beetles lay their eggs by depositing them into large crevasses and similar geographic features. They cover their clutches with carcasses and other detritus. A female siege beetle lays two to four eggs surrounded by a membrane filled with sticky ectoplasm. A single egg is over 15 feet in circumference and looks like a brown, fleshy seedpod.

In a few months, the eggs hatch, releasing nymph-stage beetles. Siege beetle nymphs molt several times before reaching the adult stage (advanced creatures with 30 HD). Each phase lasts for about a year, and large numbers of beetles die before reaching adulthood.

Environment: Siege beetles roam the iron battlefields of Acheron, but one might slip through to the Material Plane by stumbling through a planar gate. The beetles instinctively nest in dark caves or crevasses where they hibernate. When they find a battlefield littered with corpses, they push the bodies into one massive pile, then climb atop and begin to eat.

Typical Physical Characteristics: A typical siege beetle is the size of a barn and weighs thirty to forty tons. Its body is longer than it is wide, supported by slender, segmented legs covered with sticky cilia. One or two mottled colors adorn its chitin.

All siege beetles have long, paired wings that fold straight back underneath an outer shell. Pale and iridescent, the wings move so quickly that they can barely be seen when the creature flies, though they make a loud thrumming sound.

Alignment: Siege beetles have no concept of morality and are always neutral.

SOCIETY

Siege beetles have no society. However, the armies that wage war across Acheron employ these enormous insects as war beasts. A siege beetle is an unruly soldier, however, and more than one army has lost a battle because of its own siege beetles.

TYPICAL TREASURE

Siege beetles are mindless, but the possessions of their victims remain after the beetle feeds. A siege beetle has half the standard number of coins, half goods, and standard items. Its shell is a valuable commodity in places where chitin armor is valued (see For Player Characters), including the war camps and strongholds of Acheron.

FOR PLAYER CHARACTERS

Siege beetle chitin is highly desirable for making chitin armor. The chitin is treated for flexibility, then cut and reshaped into long strips. These strips are bound together by tightly woven cord when necessary. Siege beetle chitin armor is always masterwork in quality, and it provides its wearer with resistance to electricity 5 and resistance to sonic 5. A druid who wears chitin armor crafted from a siege beetle shell does not lose access to spells or class features. Chitin armor is medium armor that has the following characteristics.

Cost	Armor Bonus	Max Dex Bonus	Armor Check Penalty	Spell Failure Chance	Speed		Weight[1]
					(30 ft.)	(20 ft.)	
2,000 gp	+4	+4	–2	30%	20 ft.	15 ft.	20 lb.

[1] Weight is for armor sized to fit Medium creatures. Armor fitted for Small characters weighs half as much, and armor fitted for Large characters weighs twice as much.

SKULL LORD

Dark rumors speak of the skull lords, powerful undead beings created by the magic unleashed at the death of the mighty necromancer Vrakmul. These undead wish to call their master back from beyond mortality, using their mastery over bones as a tool and a weapon. In their quest, they show no mercy to the living or the walking dead that refuse to follow them.

SKULL LORD

Tall and regal, a skeletal figure wearing breastplate and wrapped in a flowing black cloak steps toward you. It regards its surroundings with each of its three human skulls. Shining blue flames gutter in its eye sockets, and it wields a staff of bones with skulls at each end.

SKULL LORD CR 7

Usually LE Medium undead
Init +4; **Senses** darkvision 60 ft.; Listen +12, Spot +12
Languages Common, Draconic, Infernal

AC 21, touch 14, flat-footed 17
(+4 Dex, +5 armor, +2 natural)
hp 78 (12 HD); **DR** 5/bludgeoning
Immune cold, undead immunities
Resist +4 turn resistance (see skull loss)
Fort +4, **Ref** +8, **Will** +10
Weakness skull loss

Speed 20 ft. (4 squares) in breastplate, base speed 30 ft.
Melee bone staff +12/+7 (1d6 plus 1d6 cold) or
Melee bone staff +10/+10/+5 (1d6 plus 1d6 cold)
Ranged bone shard +10 (1d6 plus 1d6 cold; see triple skulls)
Space 5 ft.; **Reach** 5 ft.
Base Atk +6; **Grp** +6
Atk Options Point Blank Shot, Precise Shot
Special Actions triple skulls
Combat Gear scroll of *inflict serious wounds*, scroll of *invisibility*, scroll of *meld into stone*, scroll of *sculpt sound*, scroll of *wall of fire*, scroll of *warp wood*

Abilities Str 11, Dex 19, Con —, Int 14, Wis 15, Cha 17
SA triple skulls
SQ create spectral rider, undead traits
Feats Point Blank Shot, Precise Shot, Two-Weapon Fighting, Weapon Finesse, Weapon Focus (bone staff)
Skills Bluff +8, Diplomacy +7, Disguise +3 (+5 acting), Hide +5, Intimidate +10, Knowledge (arcana) +12, Knowledge (dungeoneering) +7, Knowledge (religion) +12, Listen +12, Move Silently +5, Sense Motive +7, Spellcraft +9 (+11 deciphering scrolls), Spot +12, Survival +2 (+4 underground), Use Magic Device +18 (+20 scrolls)
Advancement 13–24 HD (Medium)
Possessions combat gear plus breastplate, royal outfit

Skull Loss When a skull lord is reduced to two-thirds of its full normal hit points, its creator skull shatters. The skull lord loses the ability to create undead, though extant undead remain under its control. When a skull lord is reduced to one-third of its full normal hit points, its spitting skull shatters, and it loses its bone shard ability. If a skull lord is healed so that its hit points once again exceed one-third or two-thirds of its full normal total, the appropriate skull reappears. The skull lord then regains the use of the ability granted by the skull.

A skull lord and the undead it controls have +4 turn resistance as long as the skull lord has all three of its skull heads. This turn resistance is reduced to +2 if a skull lord has only two heads, and it is lost when a skull lord has only one head remaining.

Bone Staff (Su) A skull lord's bone staff functions as a masterwork quarterstaff that deals an extra 1d6 points of cold damage. A bone staff is treated as a natural weapon for the purpose of the skull lord's use of its Weapon Finesse feat.

If a skull lord loses possession of its bone staff, the bone staff is destroyed. A skull lord can create a new bone staff as a swift action. To do so, it must slay one of its created undead servitors within 30 feet. The chosen servitor is instantly destroyed as the bone staff reappears in the skull lord's hands.

Triple Skulls (Ex) Each round as a swift action, a skull lord can use one of these abilities: bone beckon, bone shard, or create servitor. If a skull lord loses a skull (see skull loss), it loses access to one of the abilities.

Bone Beckon (Su) A skull lord can use its beckoning skull to bring forth fragments of bone from the body of an opponent within 30 feet that has a skeletal system. The creature must succeed on a DC 19 Will save or take 2d6 points of damage as the shards are torn from its body. Nonintelligent undead creatures do not get a save.

A skull lord can instantaneously cause the shards to be absorbed by a corporeal undead of its choice within 30 feet (including itself). The chosen undead heals 5 points of damage. Alternatively, a skull lord can hold the shards in the mouth of its spitting skull (see the bone shard ability).

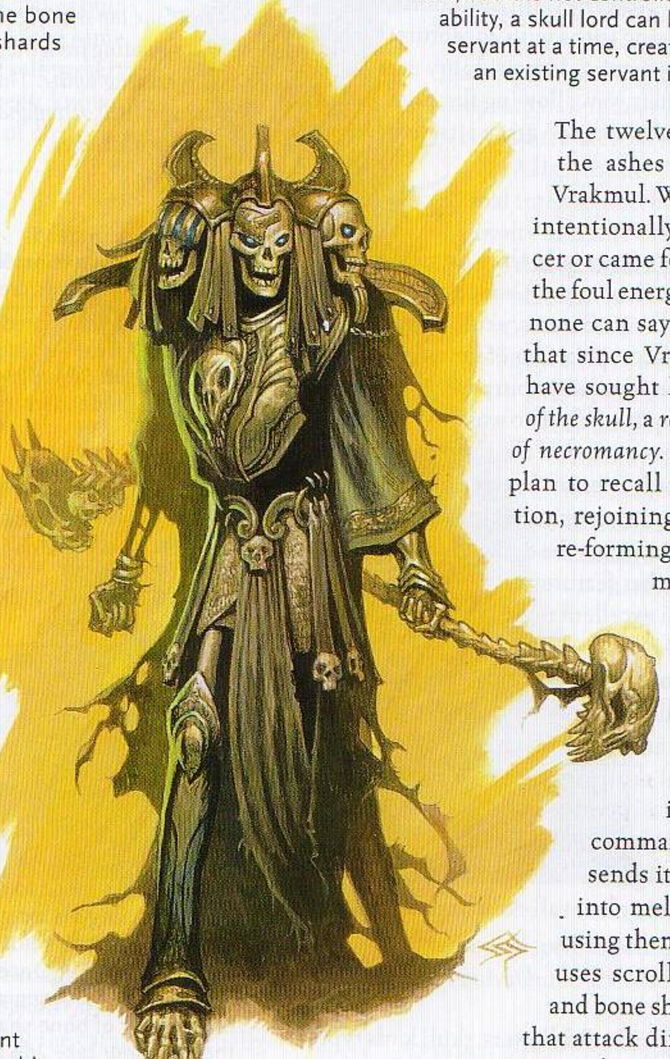
SKULL LORD LORE

Characters who have ranks in Knowledge (religion) can learn more about skull lords. When a character makes a successful skill check, the following lore is revealed, including the information from lower DCs.

Knowledge (Religion)

DC	Result
17	This creature is a skull lord, a sinister undead with powers over lesser undead creatures. Skull lords are capable of raising skeletal undead to do their evil bidding.
22	Skull lords wield bone staffs and spit bone shards at range. Both attacks deal cold damage, and a skull lord is immune to cold-based attacks.
27	Skull lords can cause bone shards to be wrenched from a creature's body, then subsequently spit them back at the same creature with unerring accuracy.
32	When a skull lord takes enough damage, it loses one of its skulls and the special power granted to it by that skull. Its ability to create undead goes first, followed by its spitting skull. Destroying the skulls also makes turning a skull lord and its minions easier.

Bone Shard (Su) A skull lord's spitting skull can spit shards of bone from its mouth. A bone shard attack has a range increment of 30 feet.



Skull lord

Illus. by S. Prescott

If a skull lord has used the bone beckon ability to hold bone shards wrenched from a creature, it can fire those shards with this ability. If the skull lord fires bone shards at the same creature the shards were taken from, the bone shard attack automatically hits unless the target has total cover or total concealment. A skull lord must make this special bone shard attack in the round immediately after it brings forth the shards with its bone beckon ability.

Create Servitor (Su) A skull lord's creator skull can create a bonespur (page 156), a serpentir (page 158), or a skeleton from nearby bones and bone shards. Undead created by this ability are automatically under the skull lord's control. A skull lord can have a number of undead under the control of its creator skull equivalent to an EL 7 encounter. For example, a skull lord might have four bonespurs, three serpentirs, or a cloud giant skeleton under its control. It could also control a mix of undead, such as five human skeletons, three bonespurs, and a serpentir.

Servitors in the presence of a skull lord at the beginning of an encounter earn experience points for PCs as normal if they are fought and defeated. Servitors created during combat are treated as summoned monsters, which do not provide additional experience points.

Create Spectral Rider (Su) Once per month, a skull lord can engage in a 12-hour ritual under the dark moon to create a spectral rider (page 160) from the remains of a mounted warrior. The spectral rider is loyal to the skull lord, but it is not controlled. Through use of this ability, a skull lord can have one spectral rider servant at a time, creating a new one only after an existing servant is destroyed.

The twelve skull lords arose from the ashes of the Black Tower of Vrakmul. Whether they were created intentionally by that mad necromancer or came forth spontaneously from the foul energies of his fallen sanctum, none can say. However, legends state that since Vrakmul's fall, the twelve have sought his lost regalia—a *mask of the skull*, a *rod of withering*, and a *staff of necromancy*. With these items, they plan to recall Vrakmul from destruction, rejoining his shattered soul and re-forming his phylactery so that he might rise as a lich.

Strategies and Tactics

Skull lords prefer to avoid direct conflict in favor of masterminding attacks by those they command. Typically, a skull lord sends its servitors and minions into melee while it hangs back, using them as a shield. A skull lord uses scrolls and its bone beckon and bone shard abilities against foes that attack directly, and creates more servitors as the need arises. Skull lords are equally effective in melee combat, however, and they put their grisly bone staffs to good use if pressed.

Sample Encounter

A skull lord is never encountered without undead minions, and independent sentient undead might willingly serve a skull lord. Individual skull lords avoid congregating so that they cannot be struck down all at once.

VRAKMUL?

The skull lords' background information makes reference to the necromancer Vrakmul, establishing these creatures as being limited in number and having a specific goal. You can take this idea and run with it, inventing the history of Vrakmul and deciding what purpose the twelve skull lords play in your campaign. Alternatively, skull lords might simply be a powerful new form of undead with no specific background or number. Skull lords might be the result of failed attempts at achieving lichdom, the undead remains of a race of three-headed beings, or a single creature formed from the magical amalgamation of three corpses.

Tomb Marauders (EL 9): While raiding a tomb for the relics contained within it, a skull lord convinced two mummies (*MM* 190) to follow it. Now the skull lord continues its search for lost magic, crossing paths with adventurers who are doing the same. The mummies' despair ability paralyzes characters who stand in their way, allowing the skull lord's summoned servitors to make coup de grace attacks against such foes.

Ecology

Skull lords are undead, and as such, they do not have a significant effect on the environment. Though they rely on skeletal corpses to create their servitors, skull lords do not indiscriminately lay waste to populations of living creatures unless such destruction serves a larger purpose. Skull lords have more specific aims, requiring them to work with circumspection, but they take direct action if the need arises.

Environment: Skull lords operate in secret, creating lairs for themselves below ancient ossuaries, taking up residence in cemeteries, or making homes in the dark depths of empty catacombs. Any location that features an ample supply of skeletal remains makes an excellent place for a skull lord to base its operations.

Typical Physical Characteristics: Humanoid in form and having three skulls, a skull lord is immediately recognizable. Each skull lord's armor and cloak are scribed with its own dark motifs, so individual skull lords are distinct from one another. These creatures stand about 6 feet tall, but their skeletal forms weigh only 50 pounds.

Alignment: Skull lords prefer complicated and precise planning to rash action. Though not all skull lords are lawful in alignment, all are uniformly evil.

Society

Other than their coterie of undead followers, skull lords typically work alone. Each seeks Vrakmul's regalia and the other arcane secrets necessary to bring back their dark lord. On rare occasions, skull lords meet to discuss recent intelligence and formulate plans, particularly if one of their number has recently been destroyed.

Typical Treasure

Skull lords are vain creatures, and they have an appreciation for the effect their appearance can have on terrified mortals. They wear circlets and bracelets of gold and silver, adorning their talonlike hands with jeweled rings. Skull lords also covet magic items, particularly those that might help them in their search for Vrakmul's regalia and those they can wield in combat. With their expertise in Use Magic Device, skull lords can read scrolls and employ magic items with ease. They have double standard treasure for their Challenge Rating in finery and magic items. The skull lord presented in this entry has 2,275 gp worth of scrolls before combat, so it can still have standard treasure generated for it.

BONESPUR

A macabre column of bone suddenly springs to life, fragments and shards near the top shaping themselves into a parody of a skull. A bone arm sprouting from the side of the column ends in a scything blade of gleaming white. Then, even as you watch, the creature collapses in on itself, reconfiguring into a rhinolike quadruped that charges with great speed.

BONESPUR CR 3

Always LE Large undead

Init +1; **Senses** darkvision 60 ft.; Listen +3, Spot +4

Languages understands creator's orders

AC 14, touch 10, flat-footed 13
(–1 size, +1 Dex, +4 natural)

hp 26 (4 HD); **DR** 5/bludgeoning

Immune cold, undead immunities

Resist stability

Fort +1, **Ref** +2, **Will** +4

Speed 10 ft. (2 squares), 40 ft. in charging form

Melee bone scythe +5 (1d8+6/19–20)

Space 10 ft.; **Reach** 10 ft.

Base Atk +2; **Grp** +10

Atk Options Improved Bull Rush, Power Attack, boneshard blast, charging form

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Abilities Str 18, Dex 12, Con —, Int 2, Wis 11, Cha 10

SA boneshard blast, charging form

SQ undead traits

Feats Improved Bull Rush, Power Attack

Skills Listen +3, Spot +4

Advancement 5–20 HD (Large)

Stability (Ex) A bonespur has better than average footing and leverage in either of its forms. It gains a +4 bonus on ability checks made to resist being bull rushed or tripped when standing on the ground (but not when climbing, flying, or otherwise not standing firmly on the ground).

Boneshard Blast (Su) Once per day, as a free action immediately following a charge, a bonespur can explode in a shower of bone shards. Creatures within 10 feet of the bonespur take 2d6 points of damage (Reflex DC 12 half). The shards of the bonespur transform into its normal towering shape at the beginning of its next turn.

Charging Form (Su) Once per day, as a swift action, a bonespur can transform from a column of bone into a rhinolike form. In this form, its speed increases to 40 feet and its scythe is transformed into a hornlike structure. The scythe deals normal damage. If a bonespur hits with its scythe after charging, however, the weapon deals an extra 2d6 points of damage.

Bonespurs are animalistic monstrosities created only for fighting and killing.

Strategies and Tactics

When first encountered, a bonespur slashes its bone scythe menacingly before shifting into its charging form and racing at the nearest group of enemies. At the end of its charge, it uses its boneshard blast ability, reshaping into a column of bone on its next turn and attacking all that come within reach.

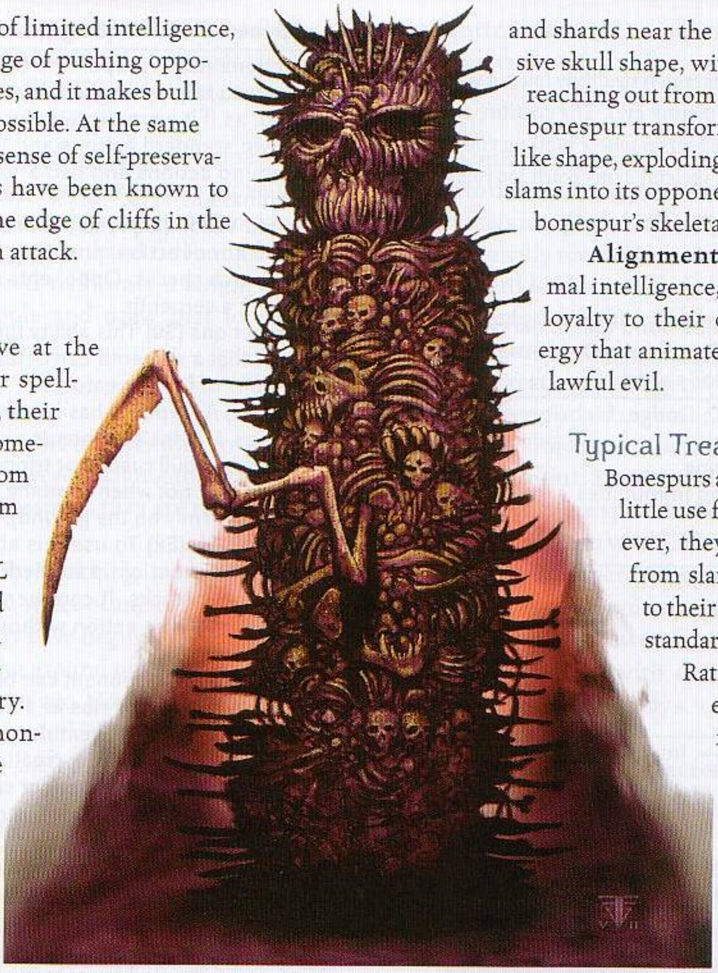
Though a bonespur is of limited intelligence, it recognizes the advantage of pushing opponents into pits or off ledges, and it makes bull rush attacks whenever possible. At the same time, a bonespur has no sense of self-preservation, and these creatures have been known to follow opponents over the edge of cliffs in the zealousness of a bull rush attack.

Sample Encounters

Though bonespurs serve at the side of the skull lord or spellcaster who created them, their errands of destruction sometimes see them sent far from their masters. They seldom appear in large groups.

Graveyard Terror (EL 3): In an effort to spread fear and panic, a skull lord has created a bonespur in a local cemetery. Though the towering monstrosity does not move from this spot, its presence has terrified the local townsfolk, and it charges any characters who pass through the cemetery gates.

Caravan of Death (EL 6): Three flatbed wagons piled high with dirt-caked bones make their way through the empty wilderness, each pulled by an owlbear skeleton (*MM* 226). What the PCs who observe do not know is that the caravan is actually a skull lord's trap designed to lure them to their doom. The piles of bones are three dormant bonespurs that rise up and attack as soon as the caravan is approached.



Bonespur

Illus. by F. Vohwinkel

Ecology

Bonespurs were first created by skull lords, whose create servitor ability can bring these dread creatures into existence. Necromancers and other spellcasters sometimes learn the secret of creating bonespurs.

Environment: Though they are highly mobile in their charging form, bonespurs are typically found near the place of their creation. Skull lords and necromancers create bonespurs in battlefields, graveyards, and wherever sufficient quantities of bones can be found. Skull lords also have their minions collect bones to be brought back to their lair, where they create bonespurs as macabre sentries or soldiers.

Typical Physical Characteristics: In its normal form, a bonespur appears to be a 12-foot-tall column of bone, 5 feet around at the base and slowly tapering toward its top. Bones and shards near the top of the tower form a massive skull shape, with a compound skeletal arm reaching out from its side. When charging, the bonespur transforms into a 12-foot-long rhino-like shape, exploding in a cloud of bone shards as it slams into its opponents. In either incarnation, a bonespur's skeletal form weighs 400 pounds.

Alignment: These creatures have animal intelligence, but they are driven by utter loyalty to their creator and the corrupt energy that animates them. They are uniformly lawful evil.

Typical Treasure

Bonespurs are simple creatures that have little use for trinkets or trophies. However, they sometimes collect wealth from slain opponents as an offering to their masters. Bonespurs have half standard treasure for their Challenge Rating, mostly in jewels and other adornments that can be found among the shattered remains of the creature after it is destroyed.

For Player Characters

A spellcaster of 8th level or higher can create a bonespur using the *create undead* spell. Creating a bonespur requires skeletal remains equivalent to six Medium creatures.

BONESPUR LORE

Characters who have ranks in Knowledge (religion) can learn more about bonespurs. When a character makes a successful skill check, the following lore is revealed, including the information from lower DCs.

Knowledge (Religion)

DC	Result
13	This dread tower of animated bone is a bonespur, a dangerous undead creature. This result reveals all undead traits.
18	Bonespurs can shift their bony forms, taking on a four-legged shape that grants them great speed and a devastating charge attack.
23	Bonespurs are immune to cold and resistant to all but bludgeoning weapons. A bonespur that charges can explode in a shower of sharp bone shards afterward, taking on its original shape shortly after doing so.

SERPENTIR

A serpentlike abomination of bone crawls stealthily toward you, both ends crowned by a skull with burning eyes. The creature appears to be composed of a series of linked torsos whose moving ribs propel it forward. Two pairs of taloned skeletal arms reach for you as the monstrosity attacks.

SERPENTIR CR 4

Always CE Large undead
Init +9, dual actions; **Senses** all-around vision, darkvision 60 ft., sense emotions 60 ft.; Listen +10, Spot +10
Languages understands creator's orders

AC 15, touch 14, flat-footed 10; Dodge, Mobility (–1 size, +5 Dex, +1 natural)
hp 52 (8 HD); **DR** 5/bludgeoning
Immune cold, flanking, undead immunities
Resist stability
Fort +2, **Ref** +7, **Will** +9

Speed 50 ft. (10 squares), climb 20 ft.
Melee 4 claws +5 each (1d6+2)
Space 10 ft.; **Reach** 5 ft.
Base Atk +4; **Grp** +10
Atk Options improved grab
Special Actions churning ribs

Abilities Str 14, Dex 20, Con —, Int 4, Wis 16, Cha 11
SA churning ribs, dual actions, improved grab
SQ undead traits
Feats Dodge, Improved Initiative, Mobility
Skills Climb +10, Hide +12, Jump +10, Listen +10, Move Silently +15, Search +1, Spot +10
Advancement 9–12 HD (Large); 13–18 HD (Huge)

Dual Actions (Ex) A serpentir's two independent heads allow it to take two rounds' worth of action in any given round, as if it were two creatures. Thus, a serpentir can use two standard actions and two move actions, two full-round actions and two 5-foot steps, or some other combination.

All-Around Vision (Ex) A serpentir's two heads allow it to look in any direction, providing a +4 racial bonus on Spot and Search checks. Opponents gain no benefit when flanking a serpentir.

Sense Emotions (Su) This ability functions like blindsense, except that a serpentir can detect only the presence and positions of living creatures.

Stability (Ex) A serpentir has better than average footing and leverage. It gains a +4 bonus on ability checks made to resist being bull rushed or tripped when standing on the ground (but not when climbing, flying, or otherwise not standing firmly on the ground).

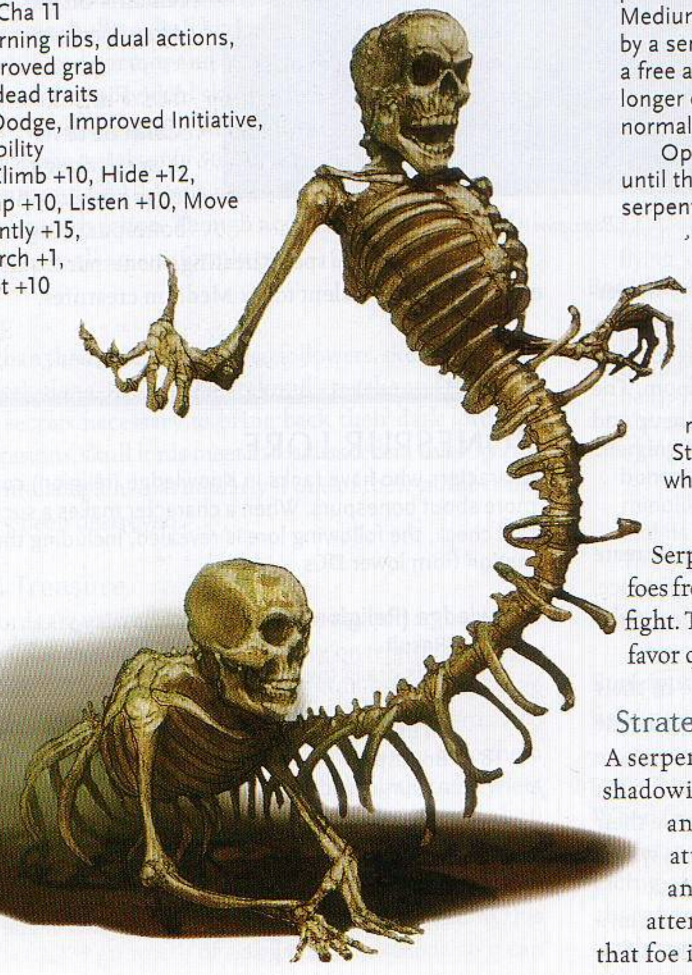
Improved Grab (Ex) To use this ability, a serpentir must hit an opponent of up to Medium size with two or more claw attacks. It can then attempt to start a grapple as a free action without provoking attacks of opportunity.

A grappled opponent can be drawn into the serpentir's churning ribs as a free action.

Churning Ribs (Ex) A serpentir's elongated torso of prehensile ribs can chew creatures to pieces. Any Medium or smaller opponent successfully grappled by a serpentir can be drawn into the churning ribs as a free action. When this occurs, the serpentir is no longer considered to be grappling and can act and move normally, dragging the creature with it as it goes.

Opponents in the churning ribs remain grappled until they succeed on a grapple check against the serpentir, allowing them to claw their way free. A creature within the churning ribs takes 2d6 points of piercing damage at the beginning of each of the serpentir's turns.

Skills Serpentirs have a +4 racial bonus on Listen checks and a +8 racial bonus on Hide, Move Silently, and Climb checks. A serpentir can choose to take 10 on Climb checks, even if rushed or threatened. Serpentirs use either their Strength or Dexterity modifier for Climb checks, whichever is higher.



Serpentir

Illus. by A. Swekel

Serpentirs are unnatural predators, preferring to stalk foes from the shadows rather than face them in a stand-up fight. Their talent for stealth and their speed make them favor quick strikes and hit-and-run tactics.

Strategies and Tactics

A serpentir conceals itself from foes whenever possible, shadowing them for hours as it sizes up their abilities and learns their habits. It takes great delight in attacking without warning, using walls, ceilings, and difficult terrain to its advantage. A serpentir attempts to grapple a weak-looking creature, draw that foe into its churning ribs, then retreat. If it has had time to prepare, it takes a preplanned escape route that is difficult for foes to follow, such as a steep mine shaft or a rubble-filled corridor. If this tactic proves successful, the serpentir continues to stalk the group, attacking in the same way at the next opportunity.

If cornered or forced to fight, a serpentir does not shy away from battle. It moves quickly as one move action, then brings five claw attacks to bear against individual targets, using its remaining standard and full-round actions. A cornered serpentir faced with only a single creature always attempts to grapple and draw that foe into its churning ribs.

Sample Encounters

Serpentirs are made to serve the masters who created them. They sometimes escape, however, slaying indiscriminately as they roam free. Like bonespurs, they are rarely found in large numbers.

Mine Killer (EL 4): Crews working in a local iron mine recently broke through to a series of ancient catacombs, but since the discovery, miners have begun to go missing. The catacombs are the prowling ground of a serpentir that was trapped in a cave-in centuries ago. Now free, it stalks anyone foolish enough to enter the dark depths of the mine. The serpentir uses the mine's shafts to move about and stalk anyone exploring its lair.

The Vampire's Pets (EL 10): A noble-turned-vampire (*MM* 250) named Dramethius Kobal has discovered two serpentirs in a vault beneath his family's estate. The 5th-level human fighter vampire's new favorite pastime is to invite strangers traveling through the region to take respite at his manor. He then turns his serpentirs loose and enjoys the show in bat form or gaseous form. The serpentirs begin hunting the PCs as soon as Kobal's dominated servants show the characters to their chambers. If either serpentir is slain, Dramethius and his three vampire spawn attack.

SERPENTIR LORE

Characters who have ranks in Knowledge (religion) can learn more about serpentirs. When a character makes a successful skill check, the following lore is revealed, including the information from lower DCs.

Knowledge (Religion)

DC	Result
14	Serpentirs are dreadful snakelike undead formed from several skeletons. This result reveals all undead traits.
19	Serpentirs are deadly hunters who can sense living beings. They stalk prey before attacking, grabbing foes and dragging them off to be devoured in the darkness.
24	A serpentir's ribs act as prehensile legs, allowing it to move at great speed. These ribs also form a churning maw that can shred creatures trapped within it.

Ecology

A serpentir is born with a hunger it can never satisfy. Compelled to devour living prey, these creatures are then forced to watch their mangled meals drop through empty ribs, leaving them eternally ravenous.

The skull lords created serpentirs, but their uncontrollable urge for slaughter has led a lot of these creatures to escape their servitude. Necromancers have since learned the art of creating these menaces, and chaotic necromantic cabals spawn such dangerous predators as implements of mindless terror.

Environment: Serpentirs favor underground environments, and they are spawned with an innate understanding of the subterranean world. Their urge to feed on the living leads a large number of free serpentirs to seek hunting grounds near humanoid settlements. Mines are a favored habitat, as are the sewer tunnels beneath human cities. Graveyards riddled with catacombs, shantytowns built around twisting alleyways, and abandoned castles make good serpentir lairs.

Typical Physical Characteristics: A serpentir consists of a number of skeletal torsos linked together spine to spine, forming a serpentlike mass of twisting ribs and vertebrae some 15 feet long and weighing 300 pounds. At each end, the creature bears a skull and two long arms with clawed hands. The prehensile ribs of a serpentir click softly as they undulate, shifting like the myriad legs of a centipede. Bits of decaying flesh and shreds of rotten cloth cling to the creature's jagged bones, remnants of its previous unsatisfying meals.

Alignment: Though created to serve, serpentirs are driven to near-madness by their insatiable hunger. Even when under the direction of a skull lord or a spellcaster, they are uniformly chaotic evil.

Typical Treasure

Serpentirs care nothing for material wealth. Though they ignore the possessions of their shredded meals, jewelry or weaponry occasionally becomes wedged between these creatures' ribs. Other treasure left behind by a serpentir's victims typically litters its hunting grounds. They have standard treasure for their Challenge Rating, strewn over a wide area.

For Player Characters

A spellcaster of 10th level or higher can create a serpentir using the *create undead* spell. Creating a serpentir requires skeletal remains equivalent to six Medium creatures.

SPECTRAL RIDER

The figure approaching you appears as an aged knight clad in ornamental full plate, but the images and crests on his armor are twisted and malformed. A prancing lion is misshapen and sprouts fiendish bat's wings, and a floral coat of arms has become a twisted mass of rotting black vines. In a skull-like face, the knight's eyes burn with a cold, unholy light.

SPECTRAL RIDER — CR 6

Usually LE Medium undead
Init +2; **Senses** darkvision 60 ft.; Listen +2, Spot +10
Aura desecration (30 ft.), magic circle against good (10 ft.)
Languages Common, Infernal

AC 19, touch 11, flat-footed 18; 23, touch 15, flat-footed 22 using ghost shift
(+1 Dex, +8 armor, +4 deflection using ghost shift)
hp 45 (7 HD); **DR** 10/bludgeoning
Immune cold, undead immunities
Fort +2, **Ref** +4, **Will** +7

Speed 20 ft. (4 squares) in full plate, base speed 30 ft.
Melee longsword +8 (1d8+6/19–20) or
Melee defiling touch +7 (1d6+4)
Space 5 ft.; **Reach** 5 ft.
Base Atk +3; **Grp** +7
Atk Options Mounted Combat, Power Attack, smite good 1/day (+4 attack, +7 damage), unholy strike
Special Actions phantom steed, shroud of living days

Abilities Str 18, Dex 14, Con —, Int 12, Wis 15, Cha 19
SA defiling touch, phantom steed, smite good, shroud of living days, unholy strike
SQ undead traits
Feats Mounted Combat, Power Attack, Weapon Focus (longsword)
Skills Bluff +12, Diplomacy +14, Disguise +12 (+14 acting), Intimidate +16, Listen +2, Ride +10, Spot +10
Advancement 8–20 HD (Medium)
Possessions full plate, longsword

Desecration Aura (Su) As the *desecrate* spell; continuous; caster level 7th. This aura also causes holy symbols of good-aligned deities to dissolve into an acidic spray of noxious gas. Attended holy symbols are allowed a DC 17 Will save against this effect. Anyone within 5 feet of an affected holy symbol takes 1d6 points of acid damage.

Magic Circle Against Good (Su) As the *magic circle against good* spell; continuous; caster level 7th. A spectral rider's *magic circle* is continuously active but can be suppressed by *dispel magic.* The spectral rider can activate it again as a free action on its next turn.

Ghost Shift (Su) A spectral rider and its equipment can become incorporeal as an immediate action when it moves. It becomes corporeal at the end of its move. When incorporeal, a spectral rider gains a +4 deflection bonus to AC due to its Charisma bonus, but it doesn't lose its armor bonus to AC.

Defiling Touch (Su) A spectral rider that hits a target with a melee touch attack deals damage equal to 1d6 points + its Cha bonus.

Unholy Strike (Su) A spectral rider's touch and any weapon it wields deals an extra 2d6 points of damage against good creatures.

Phantom Steed (Su) As the *phantom steed* spell; at will; caster level 7th. A spectral rider can use this ability as a swift action. Its steed also becomes incorporeal when a spectral rider uses its ghost shift ability.

Shroud of Living Days (Su) At will, a spectral rider can appear as it did in life. This is an illusion, but only *true seeing* reveals the spectral rider's hideous undead form.

Spectral riders act as elite bodyguards and retainers to their skull lord masters.

Strategies and Tactics

In combat, spectral riders prefer to let lesser undead minions go before them. They then often summon their phantom steeds and charge while incorporeal into the back ranks of the enemy to attack spellcasters. However, spectral riders target paladins and divine spellcasters who are obviously good-aligned first in any fray. Their contempt for such opponents is extreme, as is their fear of the power these foes bring to bear against evil creatures and undead.

Whether engaging single foes or small groups, spectral riders delight in deceit and betrayal. They use their shroud of living days ability to approach, then offer a hand in friendship, subsequently attacking with their defiling touch. Once melee is joined, spectral riders lay into opponents—they save smite attacks for the most powerful good characters.

Sample Encounter

Each spectral rider is born of particular circumstances, and encounters with a rider can play into an extensive back story. Due to the method of a rider's creation, instances when more than one appears are rare.

Fallen Champion (EL 6): Sir Drevamor Tain was one of the most famed knights of his day. A vision of youth, strength, and beauty, Tain was cut down in the early days of his adventuring career. But his example inspired his sons to become the finest knights of the realm.

Now, three hundred years later, a skull lord has defiled Sir Drevamor's tomb and raised the long-dead knight as a spectral rider. Tain patrols the region his family protected for generations, his true nature concealed by his shroud of living days. The common folk believe Tain to be a hero come to fight the evil sweeping across their land. Sadly for them, the spectral rider plans to deliver as many innocent victims as possible to the skull lord.

Ecology

Spectral riders are knights of the skull lords. Blackguards and evil knights are the individuals who most commonly become spectral riders after death. However, even the holiest of paladins can be polluted by foul necromantic magic and twisted into these dark warriors. The rituals that create a spectral rider involve unspeakable desecrations of the corpse. In the case of paladins or holy knights, deception is used to lure the spirit back to its body, binding a pure soul to tainted dead flesh.

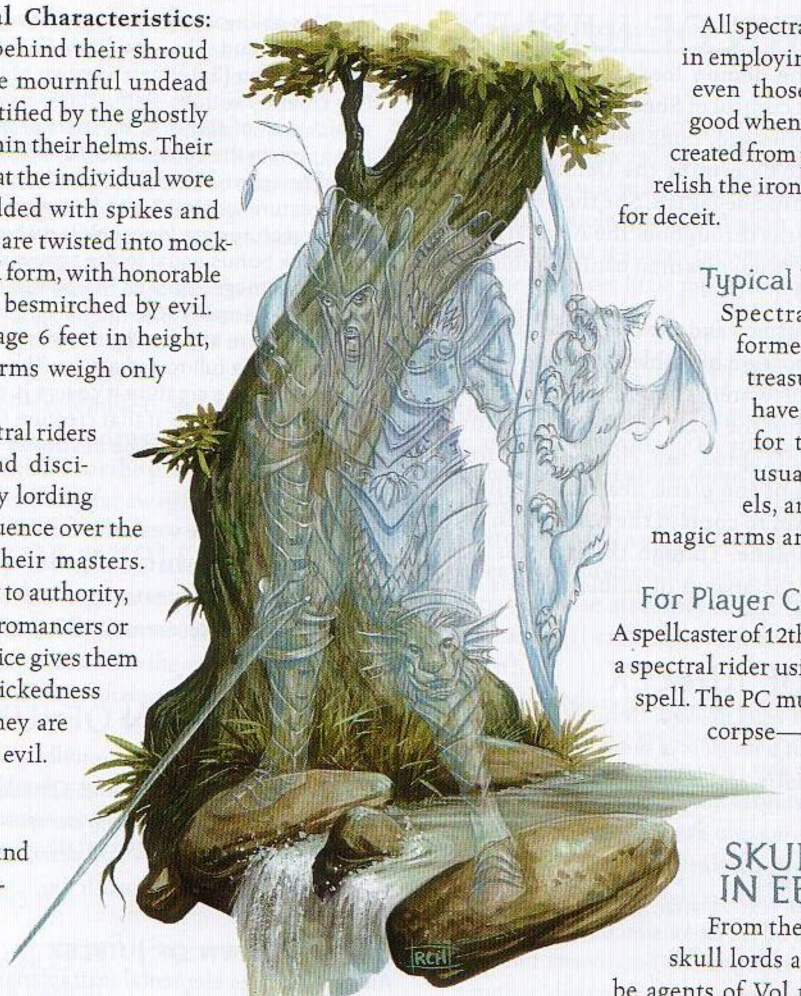
Environment: Spectral riders serve at their master's pleasure, and they go where they are sent. If freed from service, spectral riders haunt their ancestral lands or the place where they were slain, spreading evil and death wherever they go.

Typical Physical Characteristics: When not hidden behind their shroud of living days, these mournful undead knights can be identified by the ghostly skull-like visage within their helms. Their armor resembles what the individual wore in life, but it is studded with spikes and barbs. Coats of arms are twisted into mockeries of their original form, with honorable crests and emblems besmirched by evil. Spectral riders average 6 feet in height, but their skeletal forms weigh only 40 pounds.

Alignment: Spectral riders believe in order and discipline, and they enjoy lording their power and influence over the lesser minions of their masters. They reluctantly bow to authority, willingly serving necromancers or skull lords if this service gives them a chance to spread wickedness among the living. They are almost always lawful evil.

Society

Spectral riders are bound to the master who created them, and they are unified by a contemptible hatred of the living. This hatred manifests in a vicious need to corrupt other mortal knights and send them to their graves, ensuring that the ranks of undeath always have new recruits.



Spectral rider

Illus. by R. Horsley

All spectral riders take great pleasure in employing deception and trickery, even those who were paragons of good when they lived. Spectral riders created from paladins and good knights relish the irony of their newfound taste for deceit.

Typical Treasure

Spectral riders gather their former family heirlooms and treasures for themselves. They have double standard treasure for their Challenge Rating, usually in the form of jewels, art objects, and treasured magic arms and armor.

For Player Characters

A spellcaster of 12th level or higher can create a spectral rider using a *create greater undead* spell. The PC must find a suitable subject corpse—a mounted warrior of at least 6th level at the time of his or her death.

SKULL LORDS IN EBERRON

From their appearance alone, the skull lords are typically assumed to be agents of Vol the lich queen. In fact, the skull lords are some of Vol's most potent foes, seeking vengeance against the self-styled Queen of the Dead for allowing the power of undeath to be controlled by her living servants. Skull lords operate independently across Khorvaire, engaging in schemes to raise Vrakmul, as well as opposing the Order of the Emerald Claw and the Blood of Vol cult.

SKULL LORDS IN FAERÛN

The Battle of Bones is a popular destination for Faerûn's necromancers, and it is rumored that the first skull lords were spawned in that cursed place. Today, necromancers who create bonespurs and serpentirs are drawn to the bleached bone-drifts of these lifeless fields. The faithful of Velsharoon are rumored to be creating great forces of serpentirs there for their own dark purposes.

The skull lords are said to hold their infrequent meetings at the Battle of Bones, typically in deepest winter. In the weeks before these unholy assemblies, spectral riders are seen ranging from the High Forest to the Dragonmere, and everyone fears their passage. The purposes of the skull lords are inscrutable, though, and their meetings are brief.

SPECTRAL RIDER LORE

Characters who have ranks in Knowledge (religion) can learn more about spectral riders. When a character makes a successful skill check, the following lore is revealed, including the information from lower DCs.

Knowledge (Religion)

DC	Result
16	Spectral riders are elite undead knights in the service of skull lords or powerful necromancers. They ride ghostly steeds that they can summon at will.
21	These dark knights spread desecration with every step, and they can assume a ghostly incorporeal form as they move. They are protected against goodness, and their weapons are made unholy by their touch.
26	Spectral riders can slay creatures with a mere touch, and good creatures fall more easily to this defilement. They can assume the guise of their former mortal form to deceive those they seek to destroy.

SPAWN OF JUIBLEX

For untold millennia, the demon lords Zuggtmoy and Juiblex have struggled for control of Shedaklah, the 222nd layer of the Abyss. Centuries ago, Zuggtmoy used a series of powerful divinations to determine the Demon Lord of Ooze's exact location within Shedaklah. She then erected a series of adamantine plinths throughout the Abyssal layer and triggered a powerful ritual meant to banish Juiblex to a different plane.

Unfortunately for Zuggtmoy and the rest of the cosmos, the ritual simply sent a portion of Juiblex's polluted form to the Elemental Plane of Water. Though weakened, the Faceless Lord survived, but the toxic and virulent nature of his material form corrupted the elemental matter around it. The denizens of the plane near this polluted area combined their power to contain the corruption and send it to its own demiplane. Though this process was successful, it scattered the spawn of Juiblex across the Material Plane.

LESSER SPAWN OF JUIBLEX

A giant mass of dark liquid rears upward, its surface heaving as it spatters the area around it with globs of slime. Dozens of small red eyes dot the creature's surface, glaring at you like beacons of hunger and hate.

LESSER SPAWN OF JUIBLEX CR 6

Always CE Large elemental (extraplanar, water)
Init +1; **Senses** blindsense 60 ft., darkvision 60 ft.; Listen +7, Spot +6
Languages Aquan

AC 18, touch 10, flat-footed 17
(–1 size, +1 Dex, +8 natural)
hp 68 (8 HD); **DR** 5/—
Immune elemental immunities
Fort +10, **Ref** +3, **Will** +3

Speed 40 ft. (8 squares), climb 30 ft.; sludge form
Melee 2 slams +12 each (2d8+7 plus slimy infestation)
Space 10 ft.; **Reach** 10 ft.
Base Atk +6; **Grp** +17
Atk Options Cleave, Power Attack

Abilities Str 25, Dex 12, Con 19, Int 4, Wis 13, Cha 10
SA slimy infestation, sludge form
SQ elemental traits
Feats Cleave, Improved Natural Attack (slam), Power Attack
Skills Climb +15, Jump +11, Listen +7, Spot +6
Advancement 9–12 HD (Large)

Sludge Form (Ex) A spawn of Juiblex flows like thick, muddy water as it moves. Its movement never provokes attacks of opportunity. It ignores difficult terrain and can freely pass through other creatures' spaces, though it cannot end its movement in such a place.

If a lesser spawn of Juiblex enters a living creature's space, that creature must attempt a DC 18 Fortitude save. On a failed save, the creature takes 2d6 points of damage and is sickened for 1 round. On a successful save, the creature takes half damage and is not sickened.

This ability is effective against a given creature only once per round. The save DC is Constitution-based.

Slimy Infestation (Su) When a spawn of Juiblex deals damage to a creature with its slam attack, it covers its target with a thick coat of slime. At the start of the spawn's turn, it can animate the slime covering all foes within 100 feet as a free action. The slime sprouts tentacles and attacks any creature within 10 feet (including the target if no other creatures are in reach). It makes a slam attack with an attack bonus equal to the spawn's (normally +12), dealing damage equal to 1d8 points + 1/2 the spawn's Str modifier (normally +3).

A creature afflicted by slimy infestation can remove the slime as a full-round action. The slime is also destroyed if the creature it covers is dealt 10 points of cold or fire damage. If that creature has resistance to cold or fire, the slime could be destroyed without harm to the affected creature.

Though they are the weakest of the Faceless Lord's favored children, lesser spawn of Juiblex are potent threats. These massive elemental creatures wander through dungeons and other desolate areas, killing and devouring all in their path.

GREATER SPAWN OF JUIBLEX

This creature—if creature it is—wells up before you as a bubbling, oozing mess of dark clotted liquid. Chunks of unnameable sludge twist through its form, and its surface spatters and heaves. A single red eye dominates its mass, and dozens of smaller eyes scattered throughout its putrid form watch you.

GREATER SPAWN OF JUIBLEX CR 10

Always CE Huge elemental (extraplanar, water)
Init +0; **Senses** blindsense 60 ft., darkvision 60 ft.; Listen +9, Spot +9
Aura horrific presence (5 ft.)
Languages Aquan

AC 24, touch 8, flat-footed 24
(–2 size, +16 natural)
hp 126 (11 HD); **DR** 5/—
Immune elemental immunities
Fort +14, **Ref** +3, **Will** +5

Speed 40 ft. (8 squares), climb 30 ft.; sludge form
Melee 2 slams +16 each (3d8+10/19–20 plus slimy infestation)
Ranged sludge orb +6/+1 (2d8+10 plus slimy infestation)
Space 15 ft.; **Reach** 15 ft.
Base Atk +8; **Grp** +26
Atk Options Cleave, Power Attack

Abilities Str 31, Dex 10, Con 24, Int 6, Wis 15, Cha 10
SA slimy infestation, sludge form
SQ elemental traits
Feats Cleave, Improved Critical (slam), Improved Natural Attack (slam), Power Attack
Skills Climb +18, Jump +14, Listen +9, Spot +9
Advancement 12–15 HD (Huge)

Horrific Presence (Su) Any creature that starts its turn adjacent to a greater spawn of Juiblex must succeed on a DC 22 Fortitude save or be forced to move 10 feet away from the monster. This movement does not provoke attacks of opportunity and does not count toward the victim's regular movement for the round.

A creature unable to move is dazed for 1 round if it fails the save. The save DC is Constitution-based.

Sludge Form (Ex) As lesser spawn, but deals 4d6 points of damage and 1 point of Con damage. The creature is sickened for 1 round. Fortitude DC 22 to take half hit point damage and negate the Con damage.

Slimy Infestation (Su) As lesser spawn, but tentacles deal 1d8+5 points of damage.

Sludge Orb (Ex) A greater spawn of Juiblex can fling globs of effluvia up to five range increments. The range increment is 20 feet.

Greater spawn of Juiblex resemble their lesser counterparts, but they are rarer and far more dangerous. Slimy trails left in deep tunnels sometimes hint at the presence of these beings, and intelligent creatures stay far away from such areas.

ELDER SPAWN OF JUIBLEX

A hulking mass of tarry, steaming ooze rears impossibly high. Convulsions wrack the surface of this enormous creature as it burbles and spits chunks of its own matter into the air. Three large red eyes are evenly set around its bulk, with dozens of smaller eyes spread across the creature's skin.

ELDER SPAWN OF JUIBLEX CR 14

Always CE Gargantuan elemental (extraplanar, water)

Init +3; **Senses** blindsense 60 ft., darkvision 60 ft.; Listen +12, Spot +11

Aura horrific presence (5 ft.)

Languages Aquan

AC 23, touch 5, flat-footed 23 (–4 size, –1 Dex, +18 natural)

hp 216 (16 HD); **DR** 10/—

Immune elemental immunities

Fort +19, **Ref** +6, **Will** +7

Speed 40 ft. (8 squares), climb 30 ft.; sludge form

Melee 2 slams +22 each (4d8+14/19–20 plus slimy infestation)

Ranged sludge orb +7/+2/–3 (3d8+14 plus slimy infestation)

Space 20 ft.; **Reach** 20 ft.

Base Atk +12; **Grp** +38

Atk Options Cleave, Power Attack

Abilities Str 39, Dex 8, Con 29, Int 8, Wis 15, Cha 12

SA slimy infestation, sludge form

SQ elemental traits

Feats Cleave, Improved Critical (slam), Improved Initiative, Improved Natural Attack (slam), Lightning Reflexes, Power Attack

Skills Climb +22, Jump +18, Listen +12, Spot +11

Advancement 17–21 HD (Gargantuan)

Horrific Presence (Su) As greater spawn. Fortitude DC 27.

Sludge Form (Ex) As lesser spawn, but deals 6d6 points of damage and 2 points of Con damage. The creature is sickened 1 for round and knocked prone. Fortitude DC 27 to take half hit point damage, negate the Con damage, and avoid being knocked prone.

Slimy Infestation (Su) As lesser spawn, but tentacles deal 1d8+7 points of damage.

Sludge Orb (Ex) As greater spawn, but the range increment is 30 feet.

The world can be thankful that these largest and mightiest spawn of Juiblex are rare. Whispered legends speak of these creatures as vile masses bubbling up from forgotten caves to consume whole towns. An elder spawn of Juiblex can blot out the sun as it surges forward like a living wave. When it is done, it leaves little more than ruins and scattered bones behind it.

STRATEGIES AND TACTICS

Regardless of their intelligence, spawn of Juiblex display an uncanny cunning. In ruins or inhabited areas, they choose lairs that allow them to quickly launch themselves at unsuspecting targets. Whether a lesser spawn spilling out from behind a closed door or an elder spawn lingering beneath the surface of a black lake, a spawn of Juiblex that gains surprise attempts to use its sludge form to sicken and harm all creatures unfortunate enough to stand in its path.

When battle is joined, the spawn strike as many different foes as possible to get the most out of its slimy infestation. Greater and elder spawn even risk attacks of opportunity to throw sludge orbs at distant targets to infest those adversaries. Once engaged, these creatures use their sludge form to move and sicken as many opponents as possible each round, trusting in their considerable abilities to quickly even the odds.

Greater spawn and elder spawn of Juiblex are intelligent enough to distinguish between living creatures and nonliving ones such as undead and constructs. They typically ignore the latter, but they defend themselves if attacked.

SPAWN OF JUIBLEX LORE

Characters who have ranks in Knowledge (the planes) can learn more about spawn of Juiblex. When a character makes a successful skill check, the following lore is revealed, including the information from lower DCs.

Knowledge (the Planes)

DC	Result
16	This nauseating mass of toxic sludge is a spawn of Juiblex. Though it resembles an ooze and has demonic origins, it is an elemental creature.
21	If a spawn of Juiblex infests a dungeon, it lies in ambush, waiting to spill into a passage or boil up from a pool or fissure.
26	A spawn of Juiblex covers its opponents in a slimy material that can animate and attack independently. However, these creatures can sicken and even kill foes by touch alone. In battle, spawn simply flood past their prey like a destructive wave.

SAMPLE ENCOUNTER

Scattered as they are across the Material Plane, spawn of Juiblex are usually encountered alone. Even when new creatures are spawned from the old, they quickly go their own way, driven to spread their destructive potential.

Lone Spawn (EL 6–14): Though spawn of Juiblex have no direct connection to the Faceless Lord, they retain the instinctual intellect of their progenitor. These creatures are drawn to places of great power, including magical locations, the resting places of lost artifacts, ancient altars dedicated to mighty evil, or gates to the Abyss and other planes.

EL 10: An isolated monastery comes under assault by random bands of creatures from the Underdark. However, not until the catacombs beneath the monastery are explored is it realized that these waves of monsters are fleeing the presence of a greater spawn of Juiblex, drawn to the presence of a powerful magic weapon guarded by the monastic order.

ECOLOGY

The spawn of Juiblex have no place in the natural world, but they are adept at destroying it. Once it has consumed enough food, a spawn of any size splits off a new lesser spawn. Spawn of Juiblex indiscriminately kill all other living creatures except oozes and slimes.

Environment: Though spawn of Juiblex can survive in almost any nondamaging environment, they keep to subterranean passages and dungeons, retaining their demon lord's preference for underground lairs. Spawn prefer to fight in tight, winding passages, since open ground allows their prey to separate and attack from range. All spawn of Juiblex are native to the Demiplane of Filth (see below).

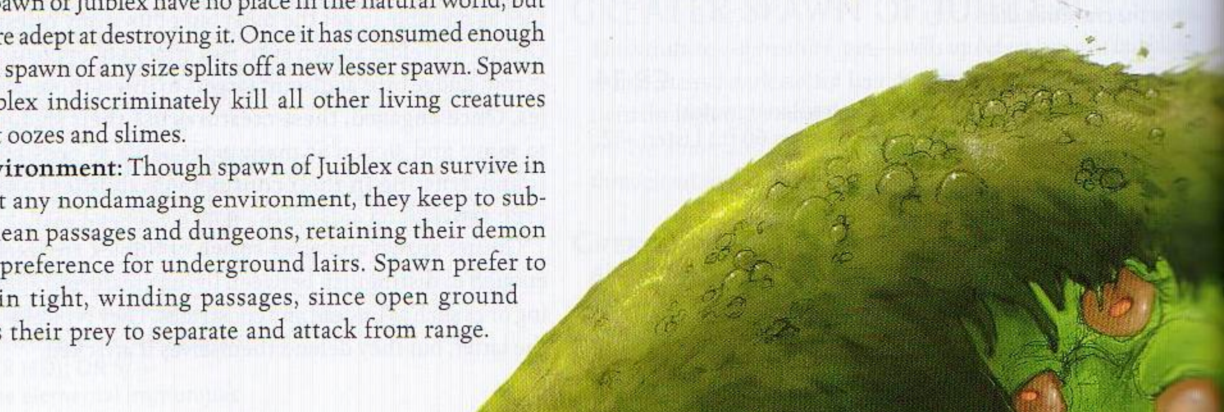
Typical Physical Characteristics: A spawn of Juiblex is an oozelike entity that spreads in a rough circle. Its semiliquid form is a putrid green shot through with swirls of black, brown, and yellow, constantly spurting and heaving as it churns.

Lesser spawn are about 10 feet in diameter and weigh approximately one and one-half tons. Greater spawn are 20 feet in diameter and can weigh ten tons. Elder spawn are 40 feet in diameter and weigh some sixty tons.

Alignment: All spawn of Juiblex carry the corrupt essence of their progenitor lord. They are uniformly chaotic evil.

TYPICAL TREASURE

Spawn of Juiblex have no need of treasure and do not collect it. However, unlike the oozes it resembles, a spawn is not acidic, and any treasure its victims were carrying remains intact and scattered throughout its lair. In rare cases, a spawn of Juiblex captures and holds treasure or magic items within its heaving form. Such items are invariably



Spawn of Juiblex

Illus. by A. Waters

tied to Juiblex or are of potential benefit to the Faceless Lord's plans. Spawn of Juiblex have half standard treasure for their Challenge Rating.

ADVANCED SPAWN OF JUIBLEX

Spawn of Juiblex grow larger by devouring massive amounts of organic matter. Though a spawn typically splits off a new lesser spawn of Juiblex regardless of its own size, one of these creatures sometimes simply continues to grow.

DEMIPLANE OF FILTH

This strange demiplane was formed when the denizens of the Elemental Plane of Water banished the corruption of Juiblex's essence from their realm. The demiplane is a mockery of a verdant forest, with trees and ground formed of pulsating slime—some of which is green slime. Streams and ponds of reeking watery ooze dot the landscape. A green sun hangs in a yellow sky that darkens by night to a featureless black curtain. Great clouds of insects fill the air, and otyughs and other foul creatures splash through the mire.

The Demiplane of Filth is 25 miles wide and 10 miles long. At its center stands a stone monolith 50 feet on each side and 400 feet tall. In a small hut atop the monolith dwells a figure, appearing to be an elderly human male, known simply as the Hermit. Made of a single shard of Juiblex's essence, the Hermit knows much of the cosmos and the history of the Abyss. Those who agree to complete a task for him can ask a single question.

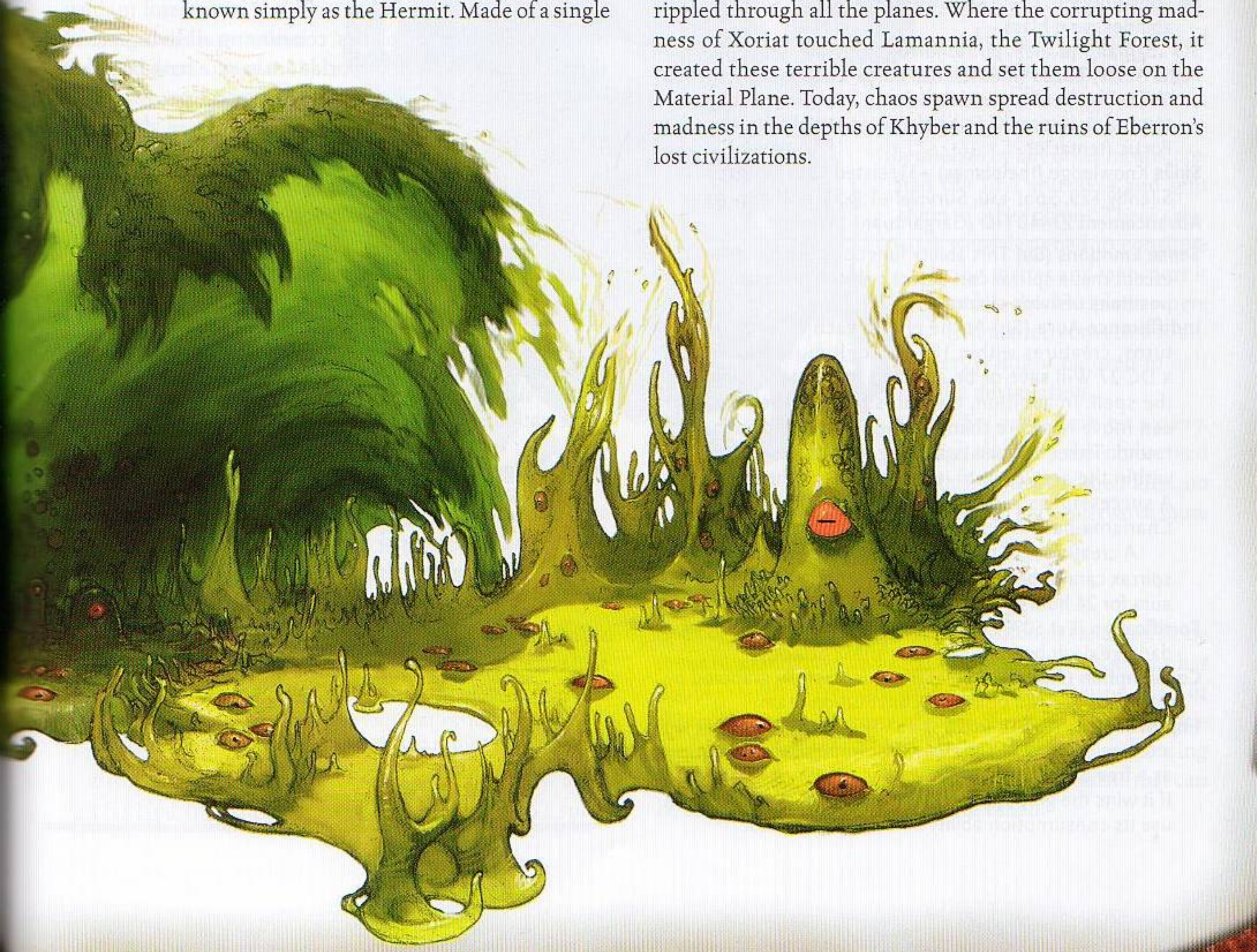
The Hermit is an avatar of Juiblex. He answers questions that further his master's aims—namely to defeat Zuggtmoy and avenge the insult done to the Faceless Lord. The quests he sends adventurers on invariably involve Juiblex's enemies, though at times they have worked toward more inscrutable ends.

When approached, the Hermit holds his eyes and mouth closed, opening them when he is addressed. When they are opened, green slime slowly leaks from them to devour his body as the question is answered and the task is set. Yet the next time a group enters his hut, the Hermit is there once more, patiently awaiting visitors.

Oozes and spawn of Juiblex prowl the Demiplane of Filth, as do those seeking Juiblex's favor. Powerful cults to the Faceless Lord build permanent gates to this wretched place, conducting sacrificial rites here or luring away a powerful creature to wreak havoc on the Material Plane.

SPAWN OF JUIBLEX IN EBERRON

In Eberron, Spawn of Juiblex are known as chaos spawn. When the daelkyr invasion was overcome by the sealing of the gates linking Eberron and Xoriat, destructive rifts rippled through all the planes. Where the corrupting madness of Xoriat touched Lamannia, the Twilight Forest, it created these terrible creatures and set them loose on the Material Plane. Today, chaos spawn spread destruction and madness in the depths of Khyber and the ruins of Eberron's lost civilizations.



SPIRRAX

A gigantic spiral shell flecked with dark metal floats menacingly across the sky, a twisted mass of blue tentacles spilling from it. Each of the tentacles ends in a swollen mass of black void. A single bulging eye above them stares out with an alien hunger.

Spirrax **CR 18**

Always LE Gargantuan aberration (extraplanar)
Init +0; **Senses** sense emotions 300 ft.; Listen +30, Spot +30
Aura indifference (180 ft.)
Languages —

AC 30, touch 6, flat-footed 30; 50% fortification
(–4 size, +16 armor, +8 natural)
hp 299 (26 HD); **DR** 15/adamantine
SR 32
Fort +15, **Ref** +8, **Will** +16

Speed 20 ft. (4 squares), fly 50 ft. (perfect); Flyby Attack
Melee 6 tentacles +27 each (2d6+11/19–20)
Space 20 ft.; **Reach** 15 ft. (20 ft. with tentacles)
Base Atk +19; **Grp** +42
Atk Options Cleave, Great Cleave, Improved Bull Rush, Improved Sunder, Power Attack, consumption, improved grab
Special Actions death spiral, void blast
Spell-Like Abilities (CL 26th):
At will—*plane shift* (self only)

Abilities Str 32, Dex 10, Con 25, Int 15, Wis 13, Cha 14
SA consumption, death spiral, improved grab, spell-like abilities, void blast
SQ adamantine shell, putrid form
Feats Ability Focus (indifference aura), Cleave, Flyby Attack, Great Cleave, Improved Bull Rush, Improved Critical (tentacle), Improved Sunder, Power Attack, Weapon Focus (tentacle)
Skills Knowledge (the planes) +31, Listen +30, Move Silently +29, Spot +30, Survival +1 (+5 on other planes)
Advancement 27–40 HD (Gargantuan)

Sense Emotions (Su) This ability functions like blindsense, except that a spirrax can detect only the presence and positions of living creatures.

Indifference Aura (Su) At the end of each of a spirrax's turns, creatures within 180 feet of it must succeed on a DC 27 Will save or be affected by *calm emotions,* as the spell. In addition, creatures that fail their saves can move no more than double their speed each round. This effect lasts as long as a creature remains within the area or until it is attacked by the spirrax. A successful save negates the effect. The save DC is Charisma-based.

A creature that successfully saves or is attacked by a spirrax cannot be affected again by that same spirrax's aura for 24 hours.

Fortification (Ex) 50% chance to ignore the additional damage dealt by a critical hit or sneak attack.

Consumption (Su) Living creatures successfully grappled by a spirrax take 1d6 points of Constitution drain.

Improved Grab (Ex) To use this ability, a spirrax must hit with a tentacle attack. It can then attempt to start a grapple as a free action without provoking attacks of opportunity. If it wins the grapple check, it establishes a hold and can use its consumption ability in following rounds.

Death Spiral (Su) When a spirrax dies, a planar rift opens up around it for 1d4 rounds, sucking everything within 150 feet to another plane of existence (determined randomly). A DC 25 Will save negates this effect.

As long as the rift remains open, a creature that succeeds on its save can choose to enter it—typically to follow comrades who have failed their saves. After this time, the rift seals permanently, taking the body of the spirrax with it.

Void Blast (Su) 120-foot line or 30-foot-radius burst, once every 1d4 rounds, damage 30d6, Reflex DC 30 half. Those reduced to 0 or fewer hit points by this blast leave behind only a fine powder, but their equipment is unaffected. The save DC is Constitution-based.

Adamantine Shell (Ex) A spirrax is surrounded by an organic shell laced with adamantine. This shell grants a +16 armor bonus, DR 15/adamantine, the ability to fly, and 50% fortification. The shell can be used only by a spirrax. When a spirrax is reduced to one-quarter of its full normal hit points or fewer, its shell collapses, causing the creature to lose the benefits provided by the shell.

Putrid Form (Ex) When a spirrax's adamantine shell collapses, its normal form—a mass of tentacles, putrescent alien organs, and a single bulging eye—is revealed. Any living creature that comes within 10 feet of a spirrax in its putrid form is sickened. In addition, that creature must succeed on a DC 30 Fortitude save or be nauseated for 1 round.

A spirrax in its putrid form gains two additional tentacle attacks when making a full attack.

Spirraxes wander the planes, consuming all living matter they come across. Whole worlds are said to have been laid waste as a result of their insatiable hunger.

STRATEGIES AND TACTICS

Spirraxes approach all combat in the same calm, calculated way. A spirrax begins by using its void blast against

SPIRRAX LORE

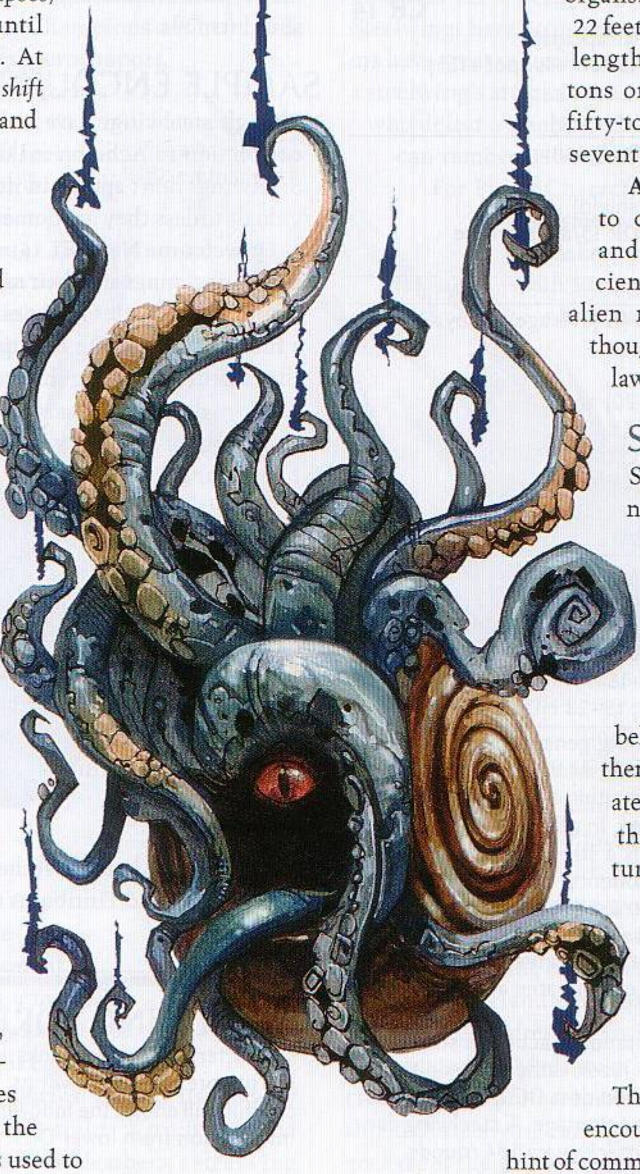
Characters who have ranks in Knowledge (the planes) can learn more about spirraxes. When a character makes a successful skill check, the following lore is revealed, including the information from lower DCs.

Knowledge (the Planes)

DC	Result
28	A spirrax is a titanic creature that inhabits a metallic shell. It devours all life and organic material in its path.
33	A spirrax seeks to seize its opponents in combat and drain their vitality. Its shell is incredibly tough and grants the creature powerful protection. If enough damage can be dealt to the shell, it collapses, leaving the creature easier to kill.
38	A spirrax radiates an unnatural aura that prevents foes from fighting it or running away. It also possesses an energy attack that can turn its enemies to ash.

any enemies not affected by its indifference aura. It then attempts to grapple active foes with its tentacles, allowing its consumption ability to finish them off. If all targets are affected by the spirrax's indifference aura, it assaults one at a time, attacking with four tentacles while attempting to grapple with the other two.

If its adamantine shell collapses, a spirrax continues to fight until it takes damage once more. At that point, it attempts to *plane shift* back to its home plane to rest and rebuild its shell.



Spirrax

Illus. by C. Critchlow

SAMPLE ENCOUNTER

Spirraxes can be encountered anywhere except underground. As a general rule, they do not work together. However, when more than one appears on a given world, their destructive paths start in the same area.

Into the Void (EL 18): What was once a land of verdant forests and fertile farmsteads is now a dead ruin. A spirrax appeared here two weeks ago and has slowly been consuming everything in its widening spiral of destruction. A few refugees have managed to escape the creature, spreading tales of the floating doom that seems set to destroy the world.

ECOLOGY

Little is known of the spirraxes, but these creatures do not appear to age or reproduce. Sages believe that only a fraction of the material a spirrax consumes is used to nourish the creature, but what happens to the rest of the living matter it destroys remains unknown.

Though spirraxes do not sleep, these creatures go into periods of inactivity for up to one month each year, floating lazily through the sky with their tentacles drawn into their shells.

Environment: Spirraxes can be found in aboveground environments where living matter is abundant. When a spirrax first appears in an area, it begins flying in a spiral pattern, consuming all life it passes over. It leaves behind it a swath of barren earth littered with metal and stone, all wrought with strange spiral markings as a result of the creature's passing.

Typical Physical Characteristics: Beneath its shell, a spirrax is a mass of tentacles and alien organs. An average spirrax has a shell 22 feet long and tentacles of the same length. The creature weighs twenty tons on its own, combined with its fifty-ton shell for a total weight of seventy tons.

Alignment: A spirrax lives only to collect matter in an orderly and precise pattern, based on ancient principles (see Society). Its alien mindset entertains no other thoughts. These creatures are always lawful evil.

SOCIETY

Spirraxes represent the last remnants of a dying demiplane. Millennia ago, the powerful civilization that had arisen there fell victim to a magical catastrophe that caused its world to decay. The residents of this ancient society, believing they were unable to save themselves by any other means, created the first spirraxes and sent them to other planes. These creatures were designed to consume living matter and transport it back to the demiplane, where that matter, converted to energy, might be used to halt the destruction.

Spirraxes have no society. Though they have been observed encountering others of their kind, no hint of communication between two or more of them has yet been seen.

TYPICAL TREASURE

Spirraxes have no interest in treasure, though metal and stone items in abundance can be found in their wake. A spirrax has double standard treasure for its Challenge Rating. Half of this treasure is in the form of coins, gems, and metal or stone magic items left behind it, with the other half representing the value of the 150 pounds or more of adamantine that can be stripped from the dead creature's shell.

STEELWING

An immense avian form darkens the sky, its majestic shape somehow incongruous with its plumage of dull gray. The noble bird's crested head arches back, and its screech shakes the earth. As it wings closer, you see that its feathers glint with keen edges.

STEELWING **CR 14**
Usually N Huge magical beast (extraplanar)
Init +12; **Senses** low-light vision; Listen +9, Spot +15
Aura razorfeather shield (5 ft.)
Languages Common

AC 28, touch 16, flat-footed 20; Dodge
(–2 size, +8 Dex, +12 natural)
Miss Chance 20% (razorfeather shield)
hp 187 (15 HD); fast healing 15; **DR** 15/adamantine
Immune cold
Fort +16, **Ref** +17, **Will** +10

Speed 50 ft. (10 squares), fly 120 ft. (average); Flyby Attack, Hover
Melee bite +22 (2d6+9) and
2 wings +20 each (1d8+4/17–20) and
2 talons +20 each (1d8+4)
Ranged 3 razorfeathers +21 each (1d8+9/17–20)
Space 15 ft.; **Reach** 15 ft.
Base Atk +15; **Grp** +32
Special Actions hail of razorfeathers

Abilities Str 28, Dex 26, Con 25, Int 6, Wis 16, Cha 18
SA hail of razorfeathers
Feats Dodge, Flyby Attack, Hover, Improved Initiative, Iron Will, Multiattack
Skills Jump +17, Listen +9, Spot +15
Advancement 16–18 HD (Huge); 19–28 HD (Gargantuan)

Razorfeather Shield (Ex) A steelwing generates a storm of razorfeathers around its body. At the beginning of a steelwing's turn, any creature within 5 feet of it takes 5d6 points of slashing damage. In addition, the storm of whirling steel feathers gives a steelwing concealment against any nonadjacent opponents.

Razorfeathers (Ex) Razorfeathers used at range veer toward their target, negating any miss chances that otherwise would apply. Due to razorfeathers, a steelwing's wing attacks and razorfeather attacks threaten a critical hit on a 17–20.

Hail of Razorfeathers (Ex) As a standard action, a steelwing can cast a 60-foot cone of its razorfeathers. Creatures caught in the area must succeed on a DC 24 Reflex save or take 15d6 points of slashing damage. A steelwing can use its hail of razorfeathers attack every 1d4 rounds.

The damage dealt by a steelwing's hail of razorfeathers is 1d6 points per Hit Die. The save DC is Constitution-based.

Steelwings are enormous avian creatures native to the Infernal Battlefield of Acheron. As befits natives of that plane, they are fierce and deadly combatants, and their appearance on the Material Plane is an ill omen.

STRATEGIES AND TACTICS

A steelwing fights from the air whenever possible, attacking creatures at range with its hail of razorfeathers. It uses Flyby Attack to rain destruction down on an enemy party before soaring out of range. If attacked by other flying creatures, a steelwing uses ranged razorfeather attacks or its devastating bite.

If facing powerful spellcasters or foes employing dangerous ranged attacks, a steelwing does not hesitate to close to melee range, even dropping to the ground. There, it makes full attacks and allows its razorfeather shield to shred its foes.

SAMPLE ENCOUNTERS

Though steelwings have only minimal intelligence, their connection to Acheron makes them cunning combatants. Steelwings don't appear in numbers greater than four individuals unless they are domesticated.

Unwelcome Nest (EL 16): A planar rift has pulled a mated pair of steelwings and their egg from Acheron to the Material Plane. The creatures have nested above a trade road through a mountain pass. The disruption to merchant traffic from the creatures' hunting threatens to throw the economies of two kingdoms into chaos unless the PCs can overcome the steelwings or find a way to return the gigantic birds to their home plane.

Egg Hunt (EL 17): A flight of three steelwings has come to the Material Plane in search of an unscrupulous horizon walker who made off with a precious steelwing egg. Enraged by the theft, the steelwings accost the party when they mistake one of the PCs for the horizon walker. Characters can attempt to prove they had nothing to do with the theft by reasoning with the steelewings. If the PCs offer to aid the steelwings in their search, the characters might gain a brace of powerful avian allies.

ECOLOGY

Steelwings are born on Acheron, where the metallic cubes of Ocanthus and Tintibulus meet amid the whirling winds

STEELWING LORE

Characters who have ranks in Knowledge (the planes) can learn more about steelwings. When a character makes a successful skill check, the following lore is revealed, including the information from lower DCs.

Knowledge (the Planes)

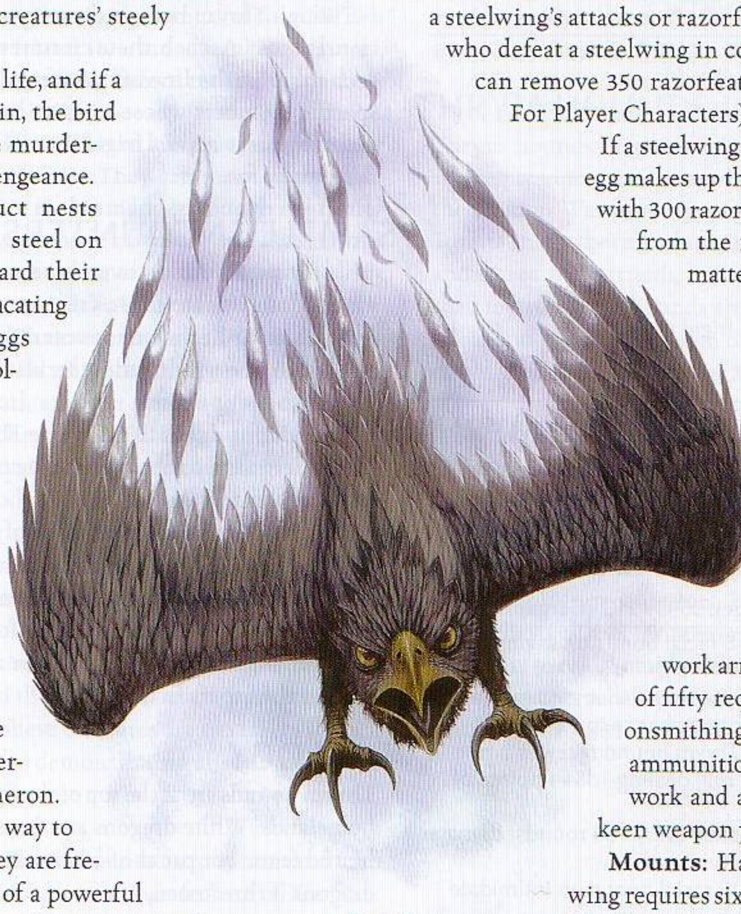
DC	Result
24	This powerful avian is a steelwing, a creature native to the Infernal Battlefield of Acheron.
29	A steelwing can shoot its bladed feathers as individual ranged attacks, or it can cast a cone of razorfeathers to deal devastating damage. Though it prefers to attack from the air, a steelwing fights with beak, wings, and talons if pressed.
34	A steelwing's whirling shroud of razorfeathers makes it all but impossible to approach, and the tearing cloud can rip melee opponents to gory shreds.

of the plane. They are sometimes called Acheron phoenixes in honor of their home and their regal shape. Steelwings roam the Infernal Battlefield freely, preying upon petitioners and visitors alike.

On Acheron, steelwings are predators and prey, as well as tamed beasts of war. Hextor has gathered a great number of steelwings in an aerie in Scourgehold, training them to aid his aerial combat forces. Champions of Grummsh, who hunt the steelwings for dangerous sport, also seek after these creatures' steely razorfeathers.

Steelwings mate for life, and if a steelwing's mate is slain, the bird of prey seeks out the murderers and exacts grim vengeance. Mated pairs construct nests of twisted iron and steel on Tintibulus. They guard their eggs jealously, rarely vacating the nest for fear of eggs being cast out by the collisions between cubes common on the plane. Dead steelwing eggs are sometimes seen floating in the airy void of Acheron, forever lost.

Environment: Steelwings are most commonly encountered on one of the four layers of the Infernal Battlefield of Acheron. When they find their way to the Material Plane, they are frequently in the service of a powerful spellcaster, on a mission from a master in Hextor's armies, or in pursuit of creatures that have attempted to steal their eggs.



Steelwing

Typical Physical Characteristics: Despite its flat gray hue, a steelwing is an impressive sight. With its crested head and neck, and its long, steely tail feathers, a steelwing cuts a fierce silhouette in the sky. The edges of its feathers thin out to a razor-sharp edge, and they are as strong as adamantine. A steelwing's plumage molts continuously and can regenerate in moments. Steelwing feathers that have not yet molted are coveted for their value in the fashioning of ammunition.

Adult steelwings are approximately 20 feet in length with a 30-foot wingspan. They weigh two and one-half tons. Their eggs are metal spheroids each the size of a small cart. As their hatching time draws close, steelwing eggs begin to tarnish and exude silver-gray dust.

Alignment: Steelwings are fiercely dedicated to their mates and young, but they eschew the conflicts of others. They are almost always neutral.

TYPICAL TREASURE

Steelwings have no interest in treasure, but their razorfeathers have great value. Razorfeathers are ruined when used in a steelwing's attacks or razorfeather shield, but characters who defeat a steelwing in combat on the Material Plane can remove 350 razorfeathers (worth 50 gp each; see For Player Characters).

If a steelwing pair is killed on Acheron, an egg makes up the bulk of their treasure, along with 300 razorfeathers that can be reclaimed from the roiling winds and tumbling matter of that plane.

In any case, a steelwing has standard treasure for its Challenge Rating.

FOR PLAYER CHARACTERS

Steelwings offer two possibilities for PCs.

Razorfeather Ammunition: Razorfeathers can be used to make masterwork arrows or bolts, with each group of fifty requiring a DC 30 Craft (weaponsmithing) check to construct. Such ammunition is considered to be masterwork and adamantine, and to have the keen weapon property.

Mounts: Hatching and raising a steelwing requires six months of work and a DC 35 Handle Animal check. Riding a steelwing requires an exotic saddle worth 500 gp, built to carry up to four Medium or smaller creatures, or two Large creatures, and protect them from the creature's razorfeather shield. A steelwing can fight when carrying riders. All riders except the one guiding the steelwing can attack while being carried, but the steelwing's lead rider cannot also attack without succeeding on a Ride check.

Steelwing eggs are worth 10,000 gp each on the open market. Professional trainers charge 20,000 gp to hatch and train a steelwing.

Carrying Capacity: A light load for a steelwing is up to 1,600 pounds; a medium load, 1,601–3,200 pounds; and a heavy load, 3,201–4,800 pounds.

Illus. by W. England

THRYM HOUND

This creature resembles an enormous wolf, twice as tall as a human at the shoulder. As it approaches, however, what you took to be fur is revealed as spikes of icy stone. With glowing white eyes, the great beast watches you intently.

THRYM HOUND **CR 10**

Usually NE Huge magical beast
Init +1; **Senses** scent; Listen +11, Spot +8
Languages Common, Draconic, Orc

AC 39, touch 9, flat-footed 38
(–2 size, +1 Dex, +30 natural)
hp 175 (13 HD)
Resist cold 15
Fort +22, **Ref** +15, **Will** +15

Speed 40 ft. (8 squares)
Melee bite +19 (3d6+8) and
2 claws +18 each (2d6+4)
Space 15 ft.; **Reach** 10 ft.
Base Atk +13; **Grp** +29
Special Actions counterstrike, frigid stare
Spell-Like Abilities (CL 13th):
3/day—*ice storm*

Abilities Str 26, Dex 12, Con 27, Int 4, Wis 20, Cha 15
SA counterstrike, frigid stare, spell-like abilities
Feats Alertness, Multiattack, Skill Focus (Intimidate), Quicken Spell-Like Ability (*ice storm*), Weapon Focus (claw)
Skills Intimidate +22, Jump +12, Listen +11, Survival +9, Spot +8
Advancement 14–32 HD (Huge); 33–39 HD (Gargantuan)

Saves Thrym hounds have a +6 racial bonus on saving throws.
Counterstrike (Ex) Any adjacent creature that swings at a Thrym hound and misses has a chance to be struck by the creature's spines. The Thrym hound receives a free attack at +19 on the attack roll, dealing 1d8+4 points of damage if it hits.
Frigid Stare (Su) 60-foot line, once every 1d4 rounds, damage 13d6 cold, Reflex DC 24 half.
Skills Thrym hounds have a +10 racial bonus on Intimidate checks.

Thrym hounds are cunning predators that dwell in lands of ice and snow, originally a gift from the deity Thrym to his frost giant worshipers. Some Thrym hounds serve the frost giants as fearsome steeds, and others run in feral packs through the polar wastes.

STRATEGIES AND TACTICS

Whether they are the hunters or the hunted, Thrym hounds make intelligent use of their special abilities in combat. When facing large numbers, they use *ice storm* (a swift action thanks to their Quicken Spell-Like Ability feat) to disorient and confuse their foes. They then close to take advantage of their reach. Once engaged in melee, they use their frigid stare as often as possible, attacking with bite and claws the rest of the time.

When fighting small numbers of foes, a Thrym hound uses its frigid stare to take probable spellcasters out of combat quickly, hoping to keep an enemy's magic off the battlefield. It reserves its *ice storm* ability for spellcasters, ranged combatants, and other characters who hang back from the fray.

Against weaker opponents, Thrym hounds engage as many foes as possible in melee, relying on their counterstrike ability to quickly even the odds. They freely use tactics that provoke attacks of opportunity, trusting that characters who have seen the Thrym hound's counterstrike will think twice before making those attacks.

Though Thrym hounds are resistant to cold, they are not immune to it. As such, these creatures are careful not to catch each other in the line of their frigid stare. In larger packs, specific members whose injuries limit their usefulness in melee use *ice storm* and frigid stare, while the others take the fight to the foe.

SAMPLE ENCOUNTERS

Wild Thrym hounds live alone or in feral packs. Frost giants domesticate these creatures for use as steeds and guardians. Whether encountered singly, in a pack, or alongside the giants they serve, Thrym hounds make formidable opponents.

Lone Hound (EL 10): A single Thrym hound lairs in an elaborately carved ice cave, causing trouble for the nomadic tribes of the nearby tundra.

Raiding Party (EL 15): A pack of three frost giants (MM 122) and four Thrym hounds has traveled to warmer climes in search of easy hunting. Whether the creatures are attacking local herds or the hunters who follow them, one Thrym hound hangs back to use *ice storm* and frigid stare before joining the others in melee.

ECOLOGY

Thrym hounds are at the top of the food chain in their frigid homelands. White dragons are the only creatures a Thrym hound fears, but packs of hounds can stand up to younger dragons if threatened.

THRYM HOUND LORE

Characters who have ranks in Knowledge (arcana) can learn more about Thrym hounds. When a character makes a successful skill check, the following lore is revealed, including the information from lower DCs.

Knowledge (Arcana)

DC	Result
20	This creature is a Thrym hound, a magical beast native to arctic lands.
25	Thrym hounds are said to be Thrym's gift to his favored giant tribes. They have a number of powerful cold-related abilities, which they use in combat to devastating effect.
30	A Thrym hound's rocky skin is likely to be impervious to all but the most powerful attacks, and its icy spines can lash out against foes.

If a Thrym hound eats voraciously for a week or two, it can go hungry for nearly a year without suffering any ill effect. Thrym hounds can eat smaller meals throughout the year if they so choose, but most of them prefer to binge and then fast, since prey can be scarce in the frigid lands where the hounds dwell.

Environment: Thrym hounds live in arctic and subarctic lands, preferring glacial regions of snow and ice. They are commonly found in cold mountains and cold hills, though they prefer temperate regions for hunting and sport. When hunting, they can be found in a broad range of climes, though they rarely linger long before returning to their arctic homes.

Thrym hounds prefer to live in ice caves, which they excavate with teeth and claws. They can make remarkably fast headway through ice in this manner, though not nearly fast enough to qualify as a mode of movement. Given time, they are capable of constructing extensive networks of icy tunnels and caverns.

Typical Physical Characteristics: Thrym hounds have the shape and build of wolves, but they are 30 feet long, including the tail, and can stand 12 feet tall at the shoulder. An adult Thrym hound weighs fifteen tons. Instead of fur, these creatures have rocklike skin that projects away from the body in fine spines. These spines are constantly frosted with ice, regardless of the surrounding temperature, and are cold to the touch. They reflexively flare out to strike at anyone attacking the Thrym hound in melee.

Alignment: Thrym hounds are selfish creatures, as quick to hunt humanoids and their livestock as they are the beasts of the wild. Nearly all these creatures are neutral evil, with more rapacious examples demonstrating chaotic evil traits.

SOCIETY

Packs of two to a dozen Thrym hounds form to hunt and raid. Raids into warmer lands are a strange feature of Thrym hound pack culture. Lone Thrym hounds occasionally go raiding, though this is normally an activity for a large pack. But even a small pack of Thrym hounds can wreak havoc in a civilized area.

Thrym hounds hunt for pleasure as much as they do for sustenance. They are intelligent enough to engage in cruelty for its own sake, putting their victims through torturous cat-and-mouse games before consuming them.

These creatures have a couple of habits that extend beyond instinct or intelligence. They have an intuitive sense of and respect for territorial boundaries, so conflicts between individuals or packs are rare. Thrym hounds also have a natural subservience toward frost giants. Thus, frost giants receive a +4 bonus on Handle Animal checks and Ride checks when dealing with Thrym hounds.

TYPICAL TREASURE

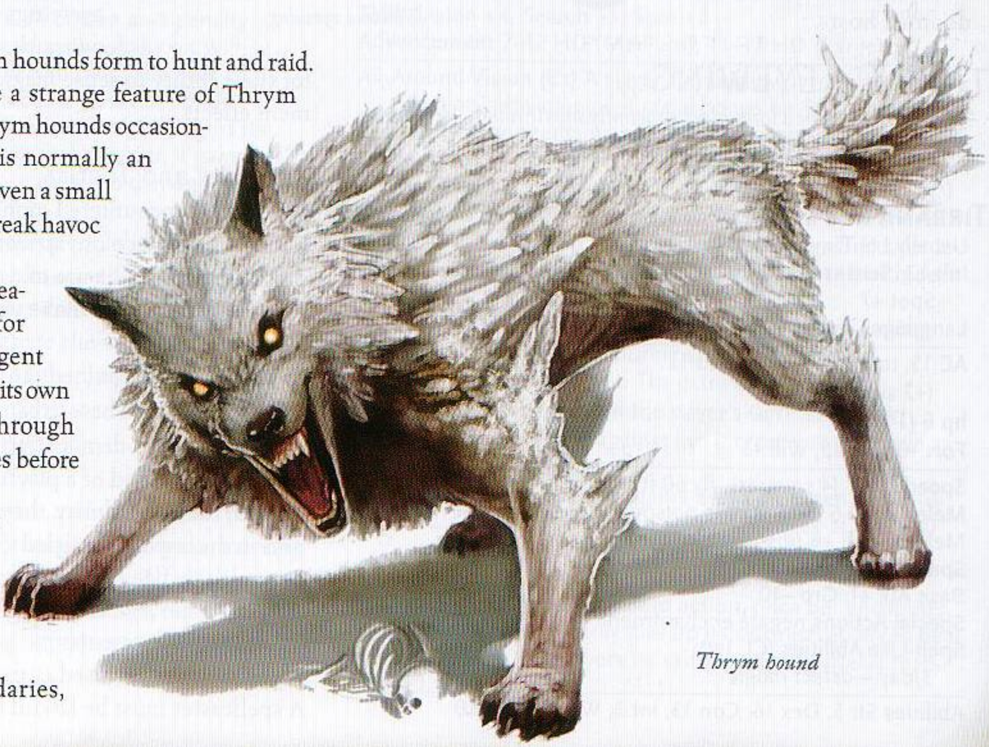
Thrym hounds have little appreciation for treasure, but they sometimes keep gems, weapons, and magic items from former victims in their lairs. They have half standard treasure for their Challenge Rating.

THRYM HOUNDS IN EBERRON

Thrym hounds originated in the Frostfell, but they have since spread to the Lhazaar Principalities, the Mror Holds, the Demon Wastes north of Eldeen Bay, and the Tashana Tundra in northern Sarlona. Their depredations are known and feared in Karrnath, but elsewhere they are little more than myth. Thrym hounds are named for a legendary Frostfell island where a kingdom of giants was said to have been established before the fall of Xen'drik.

THRYM HOUNDS IN FAERÛN

Thrym hounds live in the far north, particularly on the Great Glacier and the High Ice. Packs of these creatures are sometimes seen in the Frozenfar and the Spine of the World as well, and they have been known to raid as far south as Daggerford. In recent years, Thrym hounds have appeared in southern climes for reasons beyond the need to hunt or the desire to raid. Some believe that these Thrym hounds are under the control of Iyraclea, mistress of the Great Glacier, but their purpose is unknown.



Thrym hound

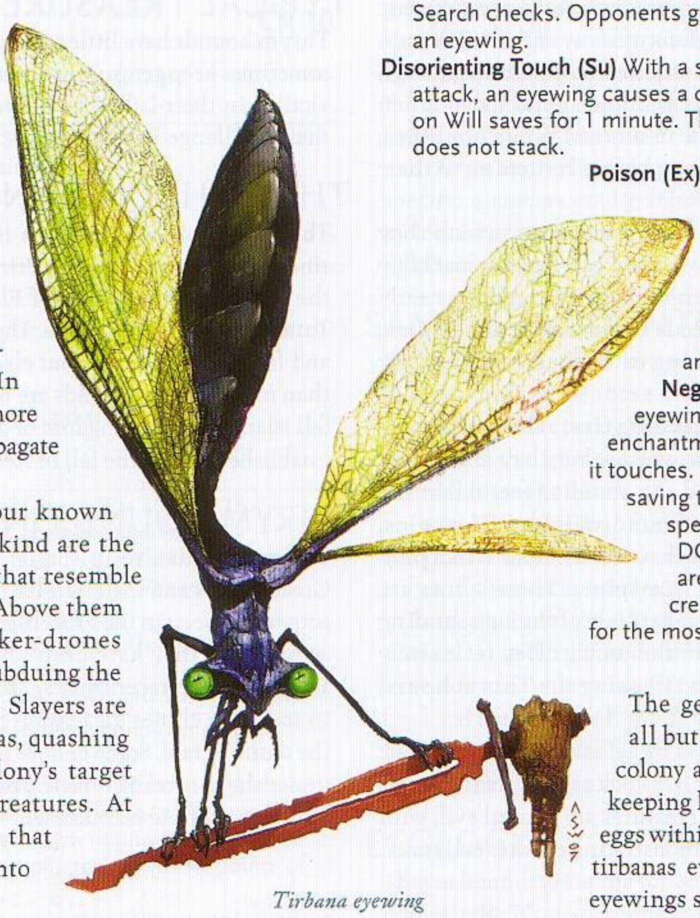
Illus. by J. Chan

TIRBANA

At the fringes of civilization, ghost towns echo with the chittering din of countless tirbanas. Endlessly toiling, endlessly breeding, these fearsome creatures spread and thrive by overwhelming the folk of isolated villages, placing those victims into a magical slumber, then implanting eggs into them.

To sustain their existence, tirbanas need living hosts. Because animals and other wildlife seldom congregate in sufficient numbers for their needs, these creatures have evolved to seek out the consistently populous communities of sentient races. In such places, tirbanas find more than enough hosts to propagate new generations.

Tirbanas take one of four known forms. The least of their kind are the eyewings, odd creatures that resemble overly large dragonflies. Above them are the drowsers, worker-drones charged with magically subduing the residents of a settlement. Slayers are the warriors of the tirbanas, quashing any resistance in the colony's target population of sentient creatures. At the top are the spawners that implant tirbana eggs into doomed hosts.



Tirbana eyewing

Illus. by A. Waters

TIRBANA EYEWING

What appears to be a large black dragonfly slips through the air with incredible grace, watching you with large green eyes.

TIRBANA EYEWING **CR 1/2**

Usually LN Tiny magical beast
Init +3; **Senses** all-around vision, darkvision 60 ft.; Listen +3, Spot +7
Languages Tirbana

AC 15, touch 15, flat-footed 12 (+2 size, +3 Dex)
hp 6 (1 HD)
Fort +3, **Ref** +5, **Will** +1

Speed 20 ft. (4 squares), fly 60 ft. (perfect)
Melee bite +6 (1d4–3 plus poison) or
Melee touch +6 (disorienting touch)
Space 2-1/2 ft.; **Reach** 0 ft.
Base Atk +1; **Grp** –10
Special Actions negate enchantment
Spell-Like Abilities (CL 1st):
3/day—*detect magic*

Abilities Str 5, Dex 16, Con 13, Int 3, Wis 13, Cha 10
SA disorienting touch, negate enchantment, poison, spell-like abilities
Feats Weapon Finesse
Skills Hide +11, Listen +3, Search +0, Spot +7
Advancement 2 HD (Tiny)

All-Around Vision (Ex) An eyewing's eyes allow it to look in any direction, providing a +4 racial bonus on Spot and Search checks. Opponents gain no benefit when flanking an eyewing.

Disorienting Touch (Su) With a successful melee touch attack, an eyewing causes a creature to take a –1 penalty on Will saves for 1 minute. The effect of multiple touches does not stack.

Poison (Ex) Injury, Fortitude DC 13 or take a –5 penalty on Listen and Spot checks and a –2 penalty on Will saves against *sleep* effects for 5 rounds. The save DC is Constitution-based and includes a +2 racial bonus.

Negate Enchantment (Su) An eyewing can attempt to negate an enchantment affecting any creature it touches. The target is allowed a new saving throw for one enchantment spell or effect, at the original DC. If multiple enchantments are in effect on the target creature, it receives a new save for the most recent effect.

The gentle tirbana eyewings are all but harmless. They serve their colony as scouts and as nursemaids, keeping host creatures alive until the eggs within those hosts hatch. The only tirbanas ever found outside a colony, eyewings sometimes serve as familiars for wizards and sorcerers. They are valued for their ability to sense magical auras and negate enchantment effects.

Strategies and Tactics

When it is encountered alone, an eyewing flees enemies, returning to the colony to alert its kin. It then leads several drowsers back to the site of danger. It uses its poisoned bite in combat, hoping to make victims more susceptible to the drowsers' *sleep* ability.

When not threatened, an eyewing is a carefree, good-natured creature. These tirbanas happily follow any creatures they come across, demonstrating complete docility in return for morsels of food or a playful scratch between the wings. If given the opportunity, they follow creatures for up to two days in the hope of being led to a settlement. Once there, they immediately flee back to the colony to report the location.

For Player Characters

An eyewing can be used as an improved familiar (*DMG* 200). A spellcaster must be lawful neutral or lawful evil, have an arcane spellcaster level of 5th, and take the Improved Familiar feat to acquire an eyewing familiar.

TIRBANA DROWSER

A buzzing noise precedes the approach of an insectlike creature the size of a dog. Its wide, armored body shambles forward on six legs. A seventh limb, ending in a handlike appendage, projects from the front of its body. The creature's triangular head has bulging green eyes. Slung beneath them is a pair of dripping mandibles that exude a yeasty stench.

TIRBANA DROWSER CR 2

Usually LN Small magical beast
Init +2; **Senses** all-around vision, darkvision 60 ft.; Listen +4, Spot +8
Languages Tirbana

AC 15, touch 13, flat-footed 13
(+1 size, +2 Dex, +2 natural)
hp 19 (3 HD)
Fort +4, **Ref** +5, **Will** +2 (+4 against enchantments)

Speed 30 ft. (6 squares), burrow 20 ft., fly 30 ft. (average)
Melee bite +7 (1d4 plus poison)
Space 5 ft.; **Reach** 5 ft.
Base Atk +3; **Grp** –1
Atk Options strength in numbers
Spell-Like Abilities (CL 3rd):
At will—*detect magic, sleep* (DC 12)
1/day—*blur*

Abilities Str 11, Dex 14, Con 13, Int 3, Wis 12, Cha 13
SA poison, spell-like abilities
Feats Weapon Finesse, Weapon Focus (bite)
Skills Hide +6, Listen +4, Search +0, Spot +8
Advancement 4–5 HD (Small)

All-Around Vision (Ex) A drowser's eyes allow it to look in any direction, providing a +4 racial bonus on Spot and Search checks. Opponents gain no benefit when flanking a drowser.

Poison (Ex) Injury, Fortitude DC 14 or take a –5 penalty on Listen and Spot checks and a –2 penalty on Will saves against *sleep* effects for 5 rounds. The save DC is Constitution-based and includes a +2 racial bonus.

Strength in Numbers (Ex) Whenever a drowser begins its turn in a space adjacent to another drowser, it gains a +2 circumstance bonus on attack rolls and damage rolls.

A tirbana colony relies on drowsers to slip stealthily into settlements and subdue the population with their *sleep* ability. The colony also contains a small number of modified drowser drones whose job is to impregnate the spawner. Once that task is complete, they fill the same place in the colony as regular drowsers.

Strategies and Tactics

Drowsers are naturally cooperative, and they work especially well together. They are a colony's first line of defense, meeting any threat head on with their *sleep* ability. A few drowsers typically hold back to use *blur* on themselves, but these join the battle quickly, surrounding opponents to help their fellows bring those foes down.

Eyewings and slayers occasionally accompany drowsers on combat missions. The smaller eyewings zoom in to nip at their foes, hoping to make their enemies more susceptible to the drowsers' *sleep* ability. If slayers are present, a handful of drowsers bestow a *blur* effect on those warriors instead of themselves. Once they have protected the slayers, drowsers fling themselves into the fray, maneuvering to flank opponents and thereby aid their larger allies.

TIRBANA SLAYER

The creature lurching toward you looks like some great beetle, hoary fur sprouting from the joints of its mud-caked carapace. Its forelegs end in jagged claws, and a pair of dripping mandibles tremble beneath bulbous red eyes.

TIRBANA SLAYER CR 4

Usually LN Medium magical beast
Init +1; **Senses** all-around vision, darkvision 60 ft.; Listen +4, Spot +8
Languages Tirbana

AC 17, touch 11, flat-footed 16
(+1 Dex, +6 natural)
hp 45 (6 HD); **DR** 5/magic
Fort +9, **Ref** +6, **Will** +3 (+7 against enchantments)

Speed 30 ft. (6 squares), fly 10 ft. (clumsy)
Melee bite +9 (1d6+3 plus poison) and
2 claws +7 each (1d4+1)
Space 5 ft.; **Reach** 5 ft.
Base Atk +6; **Grp** +9
Atk Options Cleave, Power Attack, magic strike, skirmish (+1d6, +1 AC)
Special Actions second wind

Abilities Str 17, Dex 12, Con 15, Int 3, Wis 13, Cha 4
SA magic strike, poison, skirmish
Feats Cleave, Great Fortitude^{B}, Multiattack, Power Attack
Skills Listen +4, Search +3, Spot +8
Advancement 7–12 HD (Medium); 13–18 HD (Large)

All-Around Vision (Ex) A slayer's eyes allow it to look in any direction, providing a +4 racial bonus on Spot and Search checks. Opponents gain no benefit when flanking a slayer.

Poison (Ex) Injury, Fortitude DC 17 or become stunned for 1 round, plus take a –5 penalty on Listen and Spot checks and a –2 penalty on Will saves against *sleep* effects for 5 rounds. The save DC is Constitution-based and includes a +2 racial bonus.

Skirmish (Ex) A slayer deals an extra 1d6 points of damage on all attacks it makes during any round in which it moves at least 10 feet. The extra damage applies only to attacks made on the slayer's turn. The extra damage applies only against living creatures that have a discernible anatomy.

In addition, a slayer gains a +1 competence bonus to AC during any round in which it moves at least 10 feet. This bonus lasts until the start of the slayer's next turn.

Second Wind (Ex) As a standard action, once per encounter, a slayer can temporarily give up its skirmish ability to heal 10 hit points. It recovers its skirmish ability after it rests for 1 hour.

Slayers are the warriors of a tirbana colony. Their principal responsibility is to destroy those creatures that resist the drowsers' *sleep* ability.

Strategies and Tactics

Slayers are not as numerous as eyewings and drowsers, so they fight singly or in pairs. A slayer is typically accompanied by a number of drowsers, with one of the smaller tirbanas giving the warrior the benefit of *blur* while the others fan out to surround the enemy. The slayer then races into combat, tearing through foes with its bite attack boosted by its skirmish ability. If prevented from moving, it attacks with bite and claws before taking a 5-foot step, hoping to gain enough space to use its skirmish ability during the next round.

Slayers are unsubtle combatants, typically maximizing their Power Attack feat in the hope of landing dreadful blows on their enemies. If its bite attack successfully stuns an opponent, a slayer directs its drowser allies to flank and finish that foe off, moving to skirmish with another adversary. If the slayer loses its skirmish ability to heal itself with its second wind ability, it focuses on one foe at a time, flanking if possible as it makes successive bite and claw attacks.

TIRBANA SPAWNER

A yeasty odor precedes this strange bipedal creature, which looks like a cross between a human and a giant cockroach. Its upper limbs end in handlike appendages. A pair of large violet eyes dominates its triangular head, overshadowing mandibles that slaver with a sickening eagerness.

Tirbana Spawner **CR 5**

Usually LN Medium magical beast
Init +4; **Senses** all-around vision, darkvision 60 ft.; Listen +9, Spot +13
Languages Tirbana, understands Common and Elven

AC 18, touch 14, flat-footed 14; Dodge (+4 Dex, +4 natural)
hp 57 (6 HD); **DR** 10/magic
Fort +11, **Ref** +9, **Will** +4 (+8 against enchantments)

Speed 30 ft. (6 squares)
Melee 2 bites +10 each (1d6+4 plus poison)
Ranged acid orb +10 (1d6 acid)
Space 5 ft.; **Reach** 5 ft.
Base Atk +6; **Grp** +10
Atk Options Combat Reflexes, Power Attack, magic strike
Special Actions sleep drone
Spell-Like Abilities (CL 6th):
At will—*detect magic*
2/day—*displacement*

Abilities Str 18, Dex 19, Con 18, Int 11, Wis 14, Cha 13
SA magic strike, poison, sleep drone, spell-like abilities
Feats Combat Reflexes, Dodge, Great Fortitude^{B}, Power Attack
Skills Knowledge (local) +4, Listen +9, Search +4, Spot +13
Advancement 7–12 HD (Medium); 13–18 HD (Large)

All-Around Vision (Ex) A spawner's eyes allow it to look in any direction, providing a +4 racial bonus on Spot and Search checks. Opponents gain no benefit when flanking a spawner.

Poison (Ex) Injury, Fortitude DC 19 or take a –5 penalty on Listen and Spot checks and a –2 penalty on Will saves against *sleep* effects for 5 rounds. The save DC is Constitution-based and includes a +2 racial bonus.

Acid Orb (Ex) As a standard action, a spawner can project an orb of acid to a range of 100 feet. Creatures struck by the orb take 1d6 points of acid damage, plus an additional 1d6 points of acid damage in the following round at the beginning of the spawner's turn.

Sleep Drone (Su) As a full-round action, a spawner can cause living creatures within a 60-foot-radius spread to fall asleep unless they succeed on a DC 16 Will save. An affected creature stays asleep until it takes damage or is awakened by another creature (a standard action). The save DC is Charisma-based and includes a +2 racial bonus.

The spawner is the leader of a tirbana colony. These bipedal creatures are far more intelligent than their lesser kin,

HANDS OF THE TIRBANAS

Tirbana spawners and drowsers have hands, and these creatures are clever enough to utilize tools and other handy objects. A tirbana spawner is as bright as a human, so it can exploit items in its possession on a strategic and tactical level. It can even figure out how to operate complex devices. A tirbana drowser is only slightly smarter than a chimpanzee, so on its own, it might use simple tools for accomplishing mundane tasks. It could, for example, employ a bucket for food gathering.

Since they have the required appendages, tirbana spawners and drowsers can handle weapons. A drowser can wield one-handed or light weapons designed for Small creatures, but it only gains proficiency with such armaments if trained. It's usually better off using its natural attacks in battle, making use of its dexterous hand for other tasks. Spawners are more likely to learn to use a weapon. Only an advanced spawner could take the feat required to gain proficiency with a weapon, and such a creature never bothers learning to wield a weapon that deals less damage than its mandibles.

Tirbana spawners sometimes educate drowsers on how to work with objects and machines in ways the dull-witted drowsers would never think of on their own. Spawners also devise plans and instruct their tirbana underlings on how to implement those plans. For instance, a spawner might teach its drowsers how to open and close a complex system of gates, along with how to use those gates to protect the tirbana colony. The same spawner could show the drowsers how to throw splash weapons, which require no proficiency to use.

If you design a tirbana-based adventure, consider the location and the objects available there. Many implements present in, say, a small keep, could be dangerous in the hands of the tirbanas. If you allow the tirbanas to take advantage of these items, your encounters will be that much more surprising and fun.

driving the colony to conquer populated settlements and spread their kind across the world.

Strategies and Tactics

A spawner is the brains of a colony, and without its presence and guiding influence, all the tirbanas of the colony lose their way. As a result, two to three slayers typically protect a single spawner. Since a spawner rarely ventures out of its lair, combat with one of these creatures is on its terms. Given time to prepare, a spawner uses its *displacement* ability and takes cover, trusting its sleep drones and its fanatically loyal slayers to defend it. If directly threatened, it emerges from cover to bite or fling acid orbs at its foes.

A spawner's instincts direct it to whatever action best serves the health of the colony. However, a spawner's awareness and intellect sometimes makes the tirbanas' antipathy for elves (see Society) manifest as a dark rage. If face to face with elves in its lair, a spawner attacks incessantly with its acid orbs, not caring if it runs the risk of hitting its slayer or drowser allies.

SAMPLE ENCOUNTERS

Tirbanas live only to subdue settlements and implant eggs in their captives. Once established, these creatures rarely venture outside a community except to seek water and food. Tirbanas are not wantonly violent by nature, and when they do attack, it is with the intent of taking their victims alive.

If encountered in an overrun settlement, tirbanas become far more aggressive. They do not tolerate intruders, quick to drive out any who do not belong. If alerted to attack, strike teams of slayers and drowsers prowl the streets while eyewings speed through the air. All fight independently, sharing the common goal of defending the spawner in the safety of its lair.

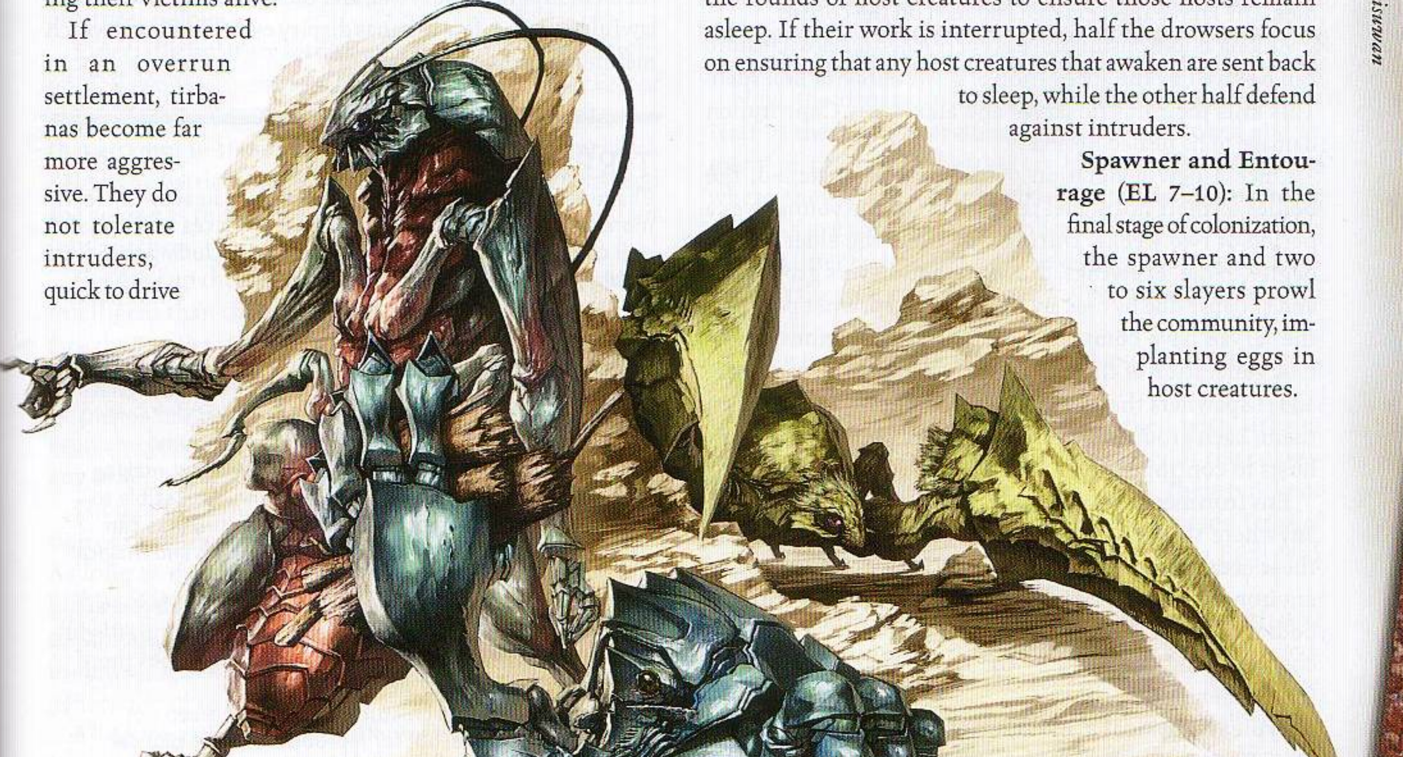
Scouts (EL 1/2–4): Before making an attack against a settlement, the spawner sends out teams of eyewings to locate populations of prospective hosts. Each eyewing travels independently and fights only if it cannot flee. However, an eyewing that is attacked returns in 1d10 minutes with two drowsers ready to fight.

Strike Teams (EL 4–6): Once a site is located, the spawner sends in teams of two eyewings and two to four drowsers to pacify the populace. These creatures avoid well-armed or well-armored foes, and they ignore enemies that succeed on two successive saves against their *sleep* ability. They know that the suppressor force set to follow them can deal with any creatures they cannot.

Suppressors (EL 6–7): Invariably, a settlement contains folk who resist the tirbanas' *sleep* abilities. A slayer and two to four drowsers are sent in to crush any such residents. The suppressor force uses divide-and-conquer tactics, preventing targets from aiding each other in combat. Directed by the slayer, the drowsers target the most powerful foes first, hoping to slay leaders to break the morale of those still alive.

Maintenance Team (EL 7–8): As soon as tirbanas take control, maintenance teams of six to eight drowsers make the rounds of host creatures to ensure those hosts remain asleep. If their work is interrupted, half the drowsers focus on ensuring that any host creatures that awaken are sent back to sleep, while the other half defend against intruders.

Spawner and Entourage (EL 7–10): In the final stage of colonization, the spawner and two to six slayers prowl the community, implanting eggs in host creatures.



Tirbanas

Illus. by S. Srisuwan

ECOLOGY

Tirbanas take nourishment from anything that can be consumed, and they can survive on dead wood and other creatures' leavings if need be. They have no natural enemies, for only the most voracious of predators can tolerate the taste of their flesh. As a result, tirbanas are free to do as they like.

Though tirbanas can sustain themselves in nearly any environment, they cannot reproduce without laying their eggs in other creatures. The warm body of a living creature incubates the eggs and provides food for tirbana larvae when they hatch. A spawner produces up to one hundred eggs in a single clutch, each needing at least 15 pounds of fresh meat to sustain it. Only populated settlements can typically meet the needs of a tirbana colony's breeding program.

Tirbanas need to keep their host creatures alive, and so they have evolved a number of unusual abilities dedicated to inducing a deep sleep in their victims. Once the hosts succumb to sleep, the spawner inserts four eggs into each victim's throat. An acidic gel coats the eggs and enables them to attach within the host's stomach. After a week, the egg hatches to release a pale white larva (1 hit point) that grows into one of the four types of tirbanas.

Each sleeping creature is an ideal meal, providing the larvae with sufficient energy to complete their transformation. A victim takes 1d6 points of Constitution damage each day the larvae feed. When its Constitution is reduced to 0, the host dies. The larvae then emerge and feed on the corpse.

As long as its Constitution has not reached 0, a host creature can be saved by the application of a *cure disease* or *heal* spell. This kills the parasitic larvae and allows any Constitution damage to be healed normally.

Once a new generation of tirbanas has hatched, the bodies of their hosts fuel the growth of the young over a period of two weeks. During this time, the elder colony begins to die. Eyewings, drowsers, and slayers grow weak and collapse one by one. By the time the spawner perishes, the larvae have completed their transformations, and a new generation of tirbanas is born. Among the young are 1d3+1 spawners that divide the rest of the colony between them. Each group then sets out to find a population of new hosts to continue the cycle.

Environment: Tirbanas are hardy and adaptable, settling anywhere that isolated communities spring up. As such, these creatures can be found in any land or underground environment. Their lairs are ghastly places, filled with the bodies of host creatures slowly starving in their sleep, or corpses being devoured by the larvae that have hatched inside them.

Typical Physical Characteristics: Tirbanas resemble giant insects, blending the features and body parts of mantises, beetles, roaches, flies, and other vermin.

An eyewing looks like an oversized dragonfly, 1 foot long and weighing 2 pounds, with two large green orbs for eyes. It flies by means of 2-foot-wide translucent wings that allow it to reach great speeds. An eyewing is at home in the air, moving with an uncanny grace.

Drowsers have wings as eyewings do, but they lack the maneuverability and speed of their smaller kin. Resembling giant cockroaches, these creatures move about on six legs and have a seventh limb equipped with a grasping hand. They have flat, shiny bodies and the triangular head common to all tirbanas. All drowsers are about 3 feet long and weigh 30 pounds.

The brutish slayers are larger than drowsers—about 5 feet long and weighing 200 pounds. Scarcely contained by their waxen shells, their bodies are filthy, covered with muck and debris that forms an effective second carapace. Their triangular heads have large red eyes.

Spawners are the strangest tirbanas of all. Unlike others of their kind, they stand upright, walking on their hind legs. Though their second set of limbs is withered and useless, the upper set is strong and equipped with fully functioning hands. They stand just under 6 feet tall and weigh 150 pounds.

Alignment: Tirbanas are not evil, but the act of subduing and slaying host creatures is an intrinsic part of their nature. Though these creatures do their best to care for victims while their larvae grow, they don't recognize the immorality of trading the lives of unwilling sentient hosts for their own survival. Tirbanas have an unshakeable commitment to their colony and its survival, and these creatures are usually lawful neutral. A few tirbanas display evil tendencies, which manifest as unnecessary cruelty.

TIRBANA LORE

Characters who have ranks in Knowledge (arcana) can learn more about tirbanas. When a character makes a successful skill check, the following lore is revealed, including the information from lower DCs.

Knowledge (Arcana)

DC	Result
11	This creature is a tirbana, a member of a menacing insectile race that invades humanoid settlements. This result reveals all magical beast traits.
16	All tirbanas have highly developed eyes, making them dangerously perceptive and impossible to flank. Though capable in combat, tirbanas can send their foes to sleep using poison and magical abilities.
21	Of the four types of tirbanas, the large slayers are the most deadly. However, all these creatures fight in concert, using their poison to make foes more susceptible to their *sleep* effects.
26	Tirbanas put creatures into a deep sleep not for defense, but for reproduction. The bipedal spawner is the leader of a tirbana colony, and the eggs it lays within a magically sleeping host eventually hatch, resulting in the host's death.

SOCIETY

Tirbanas are disciplined and keenly aware of their roles within the hierarchy of the colony. Lesser tirbanas follow the commands of a spawner without question, giving their lives if need be to ensure the colony's well-being.

Eyewing tirbanas work primarily as scouts. Skilled flyers, they can cover vast territory as they seek out isolated communities for the colony. Once tirbanas have taken over a settlement, eyewings work tirelessly to tend to the health of host creatures. They scour the environs for fresh water, collecting it in specially designed pockets in their legs. They then flutter back to the colony's sleeping victims to dribble water into their mouths. Eyewings also give nourishment to smaller or weaker host creatures (typically children) whose Constitution might not be sufficient to allow a brood of eggs to successfully hatch. From the food it eats, an eyewing disgorges a pasty mass that heals 2 points of Constitution damage when forced down a helpless victim's throat. However, most hosts are allowed to starve where they lie.

Drowsers come next in the tirbana hierarchy. It falls to these creatures to place the residents of a target settlement into the deep sleep that sees them turned into tirbana hosts. Drowsers spread out in small teams when a settlement is invaded, blanketing victims with their *sleep* ability. Once a settlement is overrun, drowsers work in coordinated teams, constantly renewing their *sleep* effect to keep host creatures helpless.

Especially in larger settlements that cannot be taken in one fell swoop, slayers are sent in to deal with any pockets of physical resistance. These warriors tear apart any creatures that attempt to stand in the way of the colony's survival. When the battle is done, the corpses of their victims feed the colony as the sleeping host creatures are prepared for implantation.

Heading up the tirbana colony is a single spawner. More intelligent than their lesser kin, spawners understand the fate that awaits the colony once the eggs hatch, and they are the only tirbanas who can truly appreciate the horror that the colony's host creatures undergo. To a spawner, however, the continued spread of the tirbana race outweighs any other concern.

Though a tirbana colony is strongly lawful, the destruction of the spawner does not leave lesser tirbanas helpless. As long as the spawner has laid any eggs, tirbanas fight for the overall defense of the colony, knowing that the continued survival of their kind depends on their ability to defend the host creatures that are growing the next generation of tirbanas.

Although tirbanas are indifferent to their victims, they reserve a special hatred for elves, whom they fear because of that race's innate immunity to *sleep* effects. They instinctively give elf settlements a wide berth, but elves who share territory with humans, halflings, and other good humanoid races sometimes send out hunting parties to destroy tirbana colonies before they spread.

SAMPLE LAIR: TIRBANA THORP

Before the tirbanas came, Martuk was a peaceful community of fifty souls in a wide rural realm. Elders passed down the secrets of coaxing plants from the soil for generations. Using these methods, the folk of Martuk have sustained themselves and grown enough surplus to trade with an enclave of wood elves ten miles to the east. The farmers and hunters of this land regard the natural world as an expression of the divine. They respect nature, killing only out of necessity and ensuring that no part of a creature goes to waste.

The gentle and trusting nature of the residents of Martuk proved to be their downfall, however. When a hunter encountered a tirbana eyewing in the nearby woods, its beauty amazed him. After leading it back to Martuk with offers of food, he showed his fellow townsfolk the graceful creature he had found. Shortly after its arrival, however, the eyewing sped off. Locals saw the creature's appearance as a sign of providence, and so they kept an eye out in case it or others of its kind returned.

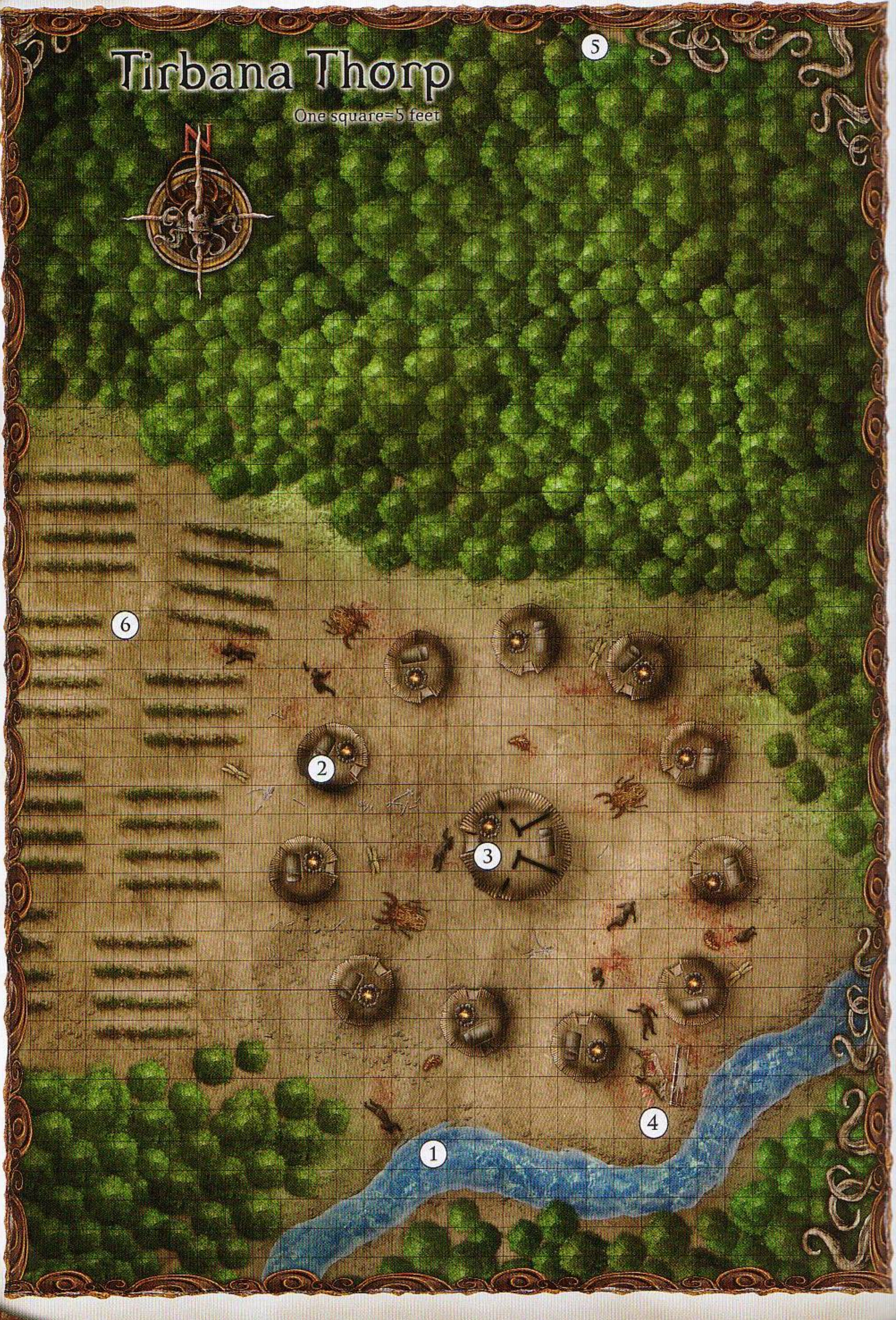
Three days after the initial encounter, return they did. A host of tirbanas poured out of the woods and set upon the town. Eyewings filled the air, while drowsers worked their fell magic to incapacitate the residents. Though a few fought back, they were slain almost to the last (see area 5). It was over quickly. Tirbanas had claimed the community for themselves, and their spawner set about implanting its eggs in the slumbering bodies of the fallen.

Now, the tirbana colony has just about run its course. Half of the new generation of eggs have hatched and as many of the original attackers have collapsed, rotting where they fell. The sight that greets any approaching party is a macabre one. Dismembered and devoured human corpses litter the ground, and a few sluggish tirbanas crawl through the area, awaiting the end. A pervasive stench hangs in the air.

When using this site, seed treasure among the encounters as you see fit; see Typical Treasure.

Tirbana Husks: Each location marked with tirbana remains indicates a place where a member of the colony succumbed to the death that awaits them all. These repellent remains stink far worse than do the human corpses. Tirbana carcasses weep a pale yellow fluid from their joints. Each dead tirbana swarms with flies.

Trees: The trees around the thorp are medium forest (*DMG* 87). To a casual observer, this appears to be an ordinary wood. However, a character who succeeds on a DC 15 Knowledge (nature) check knows that this forest is carefully maintained. Any search of the area reveals a number of stone amulets hanging from woven cords in the trees' lower branches. A DC 20 Knowledge (religion) check suggests that residents placed these ornaments here to ward away evil spirits.


Tirbana Thorp
One square=5 feet
N
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1. River (EL 1–2): The river moves at a brisk pace, and any bodies that fell here have long since washed downstream. The water is potable, but every 10 minutes, 1d4+1 eyewings arrive to gather water for the colony's sleeping host creatures.

2. Huts (EL 5–7): Eleven huts fill the center of the clearing, situated around a bigger structure (area 3). Though largely constructed of mud, wood, and leaves, the huts are sturdy. Their roofs are made of tightly woven reeds, and these structures have a hole in the center through which smoke from a central fire pit can escape.

Every hut holds 1d4+1 emaciated residents of varying ages and genders. Half their number are in a deep magical slumber, their mouths slack. The other residents are dead and currently being eaten by the hut's other inhabitants—1d3 tirbana drowsers and a single tirbana slayer.

3. Chieftain's Hut (EL 8): This large hut once housed the thorp's chieftain. His remains are spread a few feet away, face down and rotting in the mud. Unlike the smaller structures, this hut is separated by interior walls into four rooms. The tirbana spawner claimed this place as its lair, posting two slayers out front as sentries.

4. Dire Boar Corpse (EL 4): Two drowsers dismember this corpse to bring back as food for the spawner. They have carefully peeled off parts of its bristly skin and carved away hunks of meat that they stacked nearby.

5. Survivors: Against all odds, two residents who were immune to the tirbanas' *sleep* attacks managed to flee into the woods when the onslaught came. For the last week, Oolasien (CG female elf ranger 4) and her daughter Spyra (CG half-elf ranger 1) have hidden here, surviving on nuts and berries. Oolasien watched her human husband slain in the defense of the thorp, and the destruction of her community has taxed her sanity, leaving her periodically catatonic. With eyewings in constant flight around the area, Spyra is afraid to try to move her mother to a safer location. She has noticed the tirbanas have recently begun to die, however, and is preparing to return to the community to find out why.

6. Fields (EL 3): The stench of death has attracted an ankheg, which now lurks beneath the thorp's fields. At night, the monster burrows out of its subterranean nest to snatch a juicy corpse or two.

A DC 15 Spot check allows characters to notice that the ground here has been disturbed as if recently dug. A DC 10 Search check reveals the same information, and someone who has the Track feet can make a DC 15 Survival check to identify the creature that has been living and digging here.

TYPICAL TREASURE

Tirbanas have no use for wealth, and anything they cannot consume or use is left where it falls. Because tirbanas attack small and out-of-the-way communities, treasure from a tirbana encounter usually takes the form of silver and copper coins, gems, trade goods, and occasional magic items and art objects. These creatures do not carry or hoard treasure, but valuables are found in the areas where tirbanas live.

Eyewings have no treasure, whether they are encountered in the open as scouts or ministering to sleeping host creatures. Drowsers have half standard treasure for their Challenge Rating. Slayers have half standard treasure for their Challenge Rating. Spawners lair in the largest and most secure building in a settlement, such as a chieftain's hut, a great hall, or where the common wealth of the villagers is stored. They have double standard treasure for their Challenge Rating.

Trade goods found as tirbana treasure are consistent with the size of a village and the area in which it is found. Common trade goods might include livestock and horses that escaped the initial tirbana attack plus salt, furs, linen, flour, and spices. See Wealth Other than Coins, *PH* 112.

TIRBANAS IN EBERRON

Tirbanas are confined to Xen'drik, where they primarily colonize tribal settlements of lizardfolk. Though more numerous, the drow are immune to the tirbanas' *sleep* abilities. Moreover, the tirbana spawners have come to see the xenophobic drow as an impediment to widespread settlement in Xen'drik. Tirbanas in Xen'drik sometimes breed attack swarms of slayers whose only goal is to destroy drow outposts. As a result, the drow have begun to actively hunt tirbanas.

TIRBANAS IN FAERÛN

A group of Halruaan explorers recently returned from a foray into the Mhair Jungles beyond the West Wall, telling strange tales of ghost villages overgrown by vines and brush. Though these places showed signs of battle, all were full of skeletons laid out in repose, as if the villagers had simply died in their sleep. The explorers suspect plague, but the wild dwarves of the area claim this to be the work of the tirbanas—strange insect beasts that come to snatch away a sleeper's soul. So unsettling are these sites that the wild dwarves refuse to go near them.

TROLL, BLADERAGER

A snarling and muscular giant lumbers into view, plates of steel embedded in its rubbery green skin. A cap of steel is riveted to its head, and steel claws are affixed to its hands. Blood oozes from around the plating and down the claws. The creature's wild eyes betray unthinkable agony.

BLADERAGER TROLL **CR 8**

Always CE Large giant
Init +3; **Senses** darkvision 60 ft., low-light vision, scent; Listen +6, Spot +7
Languages Giant

AC 25, touch 12, flat-footed 22 (–1 size, +3 Dex, +5 natural, +8 steel plates)
hp 81 (6 HD); regeneration 5; death throes
Immune mind-affecting spells and abilities
Resist tortured mind
Fort +14, **Ref** +7, **Will** +4

Speed 20 ft. (4 squares)
Melee 2 claws +12 each (2d6+9) and bite +10 (2d6+4)
Space 10 ft. **Reach** 10 ft.
Base Atk +4; **Grp** +17
Atk Options Power Attack, pounce, rend 4d6+13

Abilities Str 28, Dex 16, Con 28, Int 6, Wis 14, Cha 9
SA death throes, pounce, rend, tortured mind
Feats Lightning Reflexes, Multiattack, Power Attack
Skills Listen +6, Spot +7
Advancement by character class; **Favored Class** fighter

Regeneration (Ex) Fire and acid deal normal damage to a bladerager troll. If a bladerager troll loses a limb or body part, the lost portion regrows in 5 minutes. The creature can reattach a severed member instantly by holding it to the stump.

Death Throes (Ex) A bladerager troll is designed to be a bomb by its sinister masters. When a bladerager troll dies, it explodes, propelling shrapnel in a 30-foot-radius burst. Those caught in the area take 5d6 points of piercing damage (Reflex DC 22 half). The save DC is Constitution-based.

Tortured Mind (Ex) A bladerager troll's mind has been torn to shreds by the constant pain of its implanted armor. Anyone who makes direct contact with a bladerager troll's tortured mind (such as by using a *detect thoughts* spell) takes 1d4 points of Wisdom damage.

Pounce (Ex) If a bladerager troll charges a foe, it can make a full attack.

Rend (Ex) A bladerager troll that hits with both claw attacks latches onto the opponent's body and tears the flesh. This attack deals an extra 4d6+13 points of damage.

STRATEGIES AND TACTICS

Bladerager trolls immediately charge any foe they see, pounce upon that opponent, and rend it to pieces. Their masters usually unleash these vicious creatures as shock troops and suicide squads.

SAMPLE ENCOUNTERS

Bladerager trolls are created, not born, so they are usually found with their masters. Since they are military creatures, they can be found in squads of two to ten when in such service. When they are not under a master's control, bladerager trolls are unable to abide the company of others without lashing out to relieve their agony, so they are encountered as solitary creatures.

Renegade (EL 8): After escaping its fire giant handlers, a bladerager troll runs amok, preying on livestock and farmers on the edge of a frontier village. The savagery of its attacks is extreme even for a troll. Though the attacks left no survivors, those who come to deal with the menace can quickly determine that they're dealing with something like a troll but worse. Tracks at the locations of recent attacks suggest the giant is heavier but not much larger than normal, and the wounds on victims are more like those created by light weapons than claws. Stranger still, the troll didn't carry any valuables away from the sites of its attacks, despite the presence of such riches.

Assault Squad (EL 13): A fire giant (*MM* 121) with four freshly trained bladerager trolls has come down from the mountains to test the mettle of her new slaves. She starts with villages nearest the mountains and then moves farther into civilized territory. Her aim is not conquest. Instead, she wants to prove the efficacy of the trolls to her superiors. She keeps notes on the squad's performance, so the defeat of the assault squad and the capture of this information could lead to further dealings with the fire giants and their new military technology—the bladerager trolls.

ECOLOGY

Bladerager candidates are selected from among the hardiest troll specimens. These ill-fated giants are flayed alive as steel is riveted onto their bones and magically augmented to work with troll physiology. Claws are then mounted on their forearms, and enormous steel jaws resembling bear traps are screwed to their skulls.

BLADERAGER TROLL LORE

Characters who have ranks in Knowledge (nature) can learn more about bladerager trolls. When a character makes a successful skill check, the following lore is revealed, including the information from lower DCs.

Knowledge (Nature)

DC	Result
15	This is some sort of troll, but it seems to have had armor and weapons grafted to it.
18	This is a bladerager troll, a giant altered by others. Bladerager trolls are implanted with steel plates and claws. This augmentation inflicts constant agony on the trolls and makes them more dangerous than typical specimens. They can attack with all their grafted weapons after a mad charge.
23	The pain endured by bladerager trolls addles their minds. Mind-affecting spells and abilities cannot manipulate them, and those who contact a bladerager's mind suffer a portion of the troll's madness.

Environment: Bladerager trolls are most commonly found near where normal trolls live and breed, usually in the vicinity of mountain ranges in colder climates. After their augmentation, bladerager trolls go where their masters send them. An independent bladerager troll wanders blindly, so it might be found far from where trolls normally range.

Typical Physical Characteristics: Bladeragers resemble mighty trolls that have armor plating covering large areas of their body, as well as steel claws and teeth. They are recognizable for what they are, but their grafts are horrific and bloody. Skin seems to seethe and recede around the armor due to the troll's regeneration ability, and blood sometimes escapes from near the edges of the troll's plating. A typical bladerager troll is slightly taller and broader than a normal troll, and the large amount of metal inserted into its body makes it weigh about 650 pounds.

Alignment: Trolls are fearless and remorseless hunters that know nothing of mercy, and bladeragers add unhealthy doses of madness and brutality to that foul demeanor. Bladerager trolls are always chaotic evil.

TYPICAL TREASURE

Bladerager trolls' tortured minds cannot grasp anything beyond pain, wholesale slaughter, and the need to feed. They carry and value no treasure. The trolls' master might be richer than normal after collecting the possessions of those slain by bladerager trolls.

BLADERAGER TROLLS WITH CLASS LEVELS

Because of their constant agony, bladerager trolls have little ability to comprehend complex skills. They gain levels as fighters or barbarians, both of which are associated classes for the creatures.

Level Adjustment: +5.

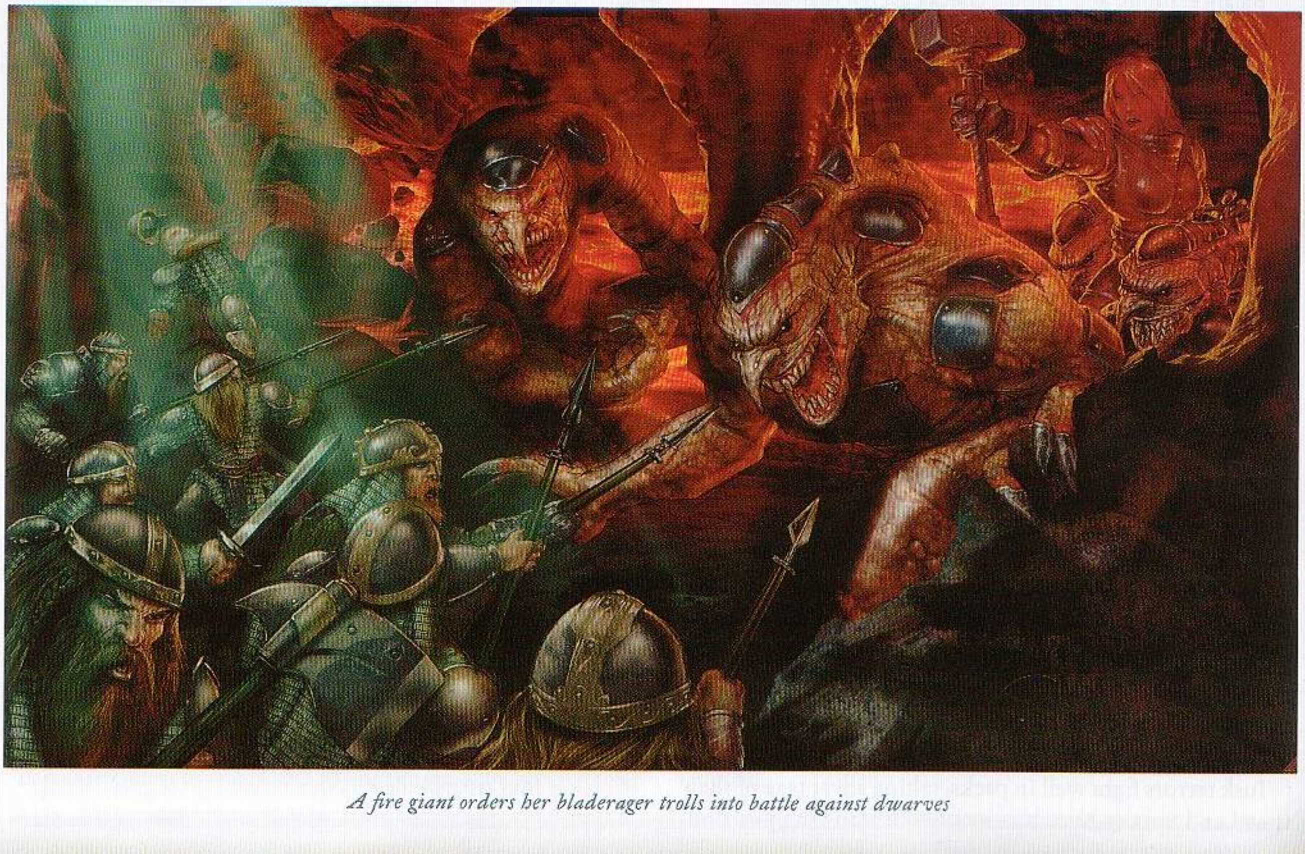
BLADERAGER TROLLS IN EBERRON

Bladeragers were once frontline troops in Xen'drik's armies, but the practice of outfitting trolls with implanted armor and weapons vanished with the fall of the giant civilization. In the southern reaches of the shattered land, a tribe of cloud giants recently unearthed an armoring chamber and thereby learned about the bladerager process. The cloud giants have begun enslaving trolls and transforming them into bladeragers, hoping these dangerous monstrosities can tip the balance in a war with several nearby clans of drow.

BLADERAGER TROLLS IN FAERÛN

Bladerager trolls were first introduced to Faerûn in the armies of Zhentil Keep, but after that redoubt's shattering, they were unleashed upon the world at large. A good number of these renegade bladeragers wander the Moonsea region, wreaking havoc wherever they appear. One ogre tribe in Thar has captured a bladerager troll and uses it as an advance strike unit during battles.

Illus. by A. Swekel



A fire giant orders her bladerager trolls into battle against dwarves

TUSK TERROR

Though this creature resembles an angry wild boar, its eyes glint with a dark intelligence. The beast bears a long, flexible tail and wide-set serrated tusks that glisten with spittle. Bulges of muscle ripple beneath its mottled fur as it charges.

TUSK TERROR **CR 8**

Usually CN Medium magical beast

Init +7; **Senses** darkvision 60 ft., low-light vision; Listen +3, Spot +3

Languages Tusk Terror; understands Common and Undercommon

AC 20, touch 17, flat-footed 13; Dodge, Mobility (+7 Dex, +3 natural)

hp 110 (13 HD)

Fort +11, **Ref** +15, **Will** +6; mobile

Speed 80 ft. (16 squares); Spring Attack

Melee gore +15 (1d8+2) and 2 claws +10 each (1d4+1)

Space 5 ft.; **Reach** 5 ft.

Base Atk +13; **Grp** +15

Abilities Str 14, Dex 25, Con 16, Int 11, Wis 14, Cha 9

Feats Acrobatic, Dodge, Improved Natural Weapon (gore), Mobility, Spring Attack

Skills Balance +25, Jump +40, Listen +3, Spot +3, Tumble +35

Advancement 14–20 HD (Medium); 21–26 HD (Large)

Mobile (Su) A tusk terror has a +6 racial bonus on saving throws made to avoid effects that would restrict its movement. This includes the Will save against a *slow* spell, the Reflex save made to avoid the full effect of a *web* spell or a tanglefoot bag, and so on.

Skills Tusk terrors have a +8 racial bonus on Balance, Jump, and Tumble checks. They can choose to take 10 on Balance, Jump, and Tumble checks even if rushed or threatened.

Tusk terrors are intelligent predators that resemble the wild boars they were bred from. Deviously cunning and dangerously unpredictable, these creatures are fierce combatants.

STRATEGIES AND TACTICS

Tusk terrors fight by making use of their Spring Attack feat, dashing in for a devastating bite, then retreating behind cover or beyond the range of counterattacks. Their high ranks in Tumble combine with their skill mastery to allow them to move through threatened areas and even squares occupied by hostile characters without provoking attacks of opportunity. Using Balance and Jump, they can move easily across difficult terrain.

Tusk terrors prefer to fight in a large area that offers cover and features obstacles. They can jump vertically to attack low-flying creatures, but are wary of attacks from the air. In normal terrain, a tusk terror can long jump 50 feet or high jump 12 feet (half those distances without a running start), tumble past eleven opponents at full speed, or tumble through six opponents at full speed without having to roll for its checks.

Tusk terrors fight well in packs, taking advantage of their speed and Spring Attack to move into flanking position, attack, then move off again. A tusk terror that is badly wounded tries to flee from combat. These creatures rarely fight to the death.

SAMPLE ENCOUNTER

Tusk terrors sometimes gather in small packs. A pack of these creatures typically contains two to six members. They cooperate intelligently, but if the fight turns against one particular creature, it invariably flees. Packs seldom stay together longer than the length of a hunting season. Mated pairs are an exception, normally staying together until any young reach maturity.

Terror Pack (EL 10): Three tusk terrors have been hunting together in a thick forest for a month, and they employ refined tactics. Having witnessed too many settlers despoiling their hunting grounds, they attack humanoids on sight. A few hunters have fallen to their attacks, and the locals in the area fear the woods now.

ECOLOGY

Tusk terrors maintain their position in an area not by challenging other predators, but by running away from those that might defeat them. Singly or in packs, tusk terrors establish a territory and become intimately familiar with it. Whether hunting or hunted, this familiarity allows them to use cover and difficult terrain to their best advantage.

Tusk terrors prefer to hunt single slow-moving creatures, attacking such beasts repeatedly and granting little chance for the target to counterattack. A single tusk terror can kill an animal as large as an elephant with little trouble, but if smaller, faster prey is the only option, the tusk terror's speed is up to the chase.

This is not to say that tusk terrors eat only meat. Like the wild pigs they resemble, tusk terrors are omnivorous, eating plants and animals as it suits them. These creatures spend most of their time hunting and foraging, but hunting provides more sport to satisfy their bright minds.

TUSK TERROR LORE

Characters who have ranks in Knowledge (arcana) can learn more about tusk terrors. When a character makes a successful skill check, the following lore is revealed, including the information from lower DCs.

Knowledge (Arcana)

DC	Result
18	This boarlike creature is a tusk terror, a fierce and fast-moving magical beast.
23	Tusk terrors rely on speed and maneuverability to bring down their prey. They can tumble around opponents, leap high into the air, and move at speed through the roughest terrain.
28	Tusk terrors are intelligent and cunning, and they attack in such a way as to prevent their prey from fighting back. They are not brave creatures, however, and if seriously injured or threatened, they typically flee.

Tusk terrors mate seasonally. A pair seldom maintains a relationship after their young are reared. During the mating ritual, males vie for females' attention, engaging in bloody matches and acrobatic dances. After she selects her favorite male and mates with him, a female tusk terror gives birth to a litter of around six tiny terrors four months later. She feeds them with milk, and the male tusk terror supplements this diet with meat and forage. Young mature in about a year.

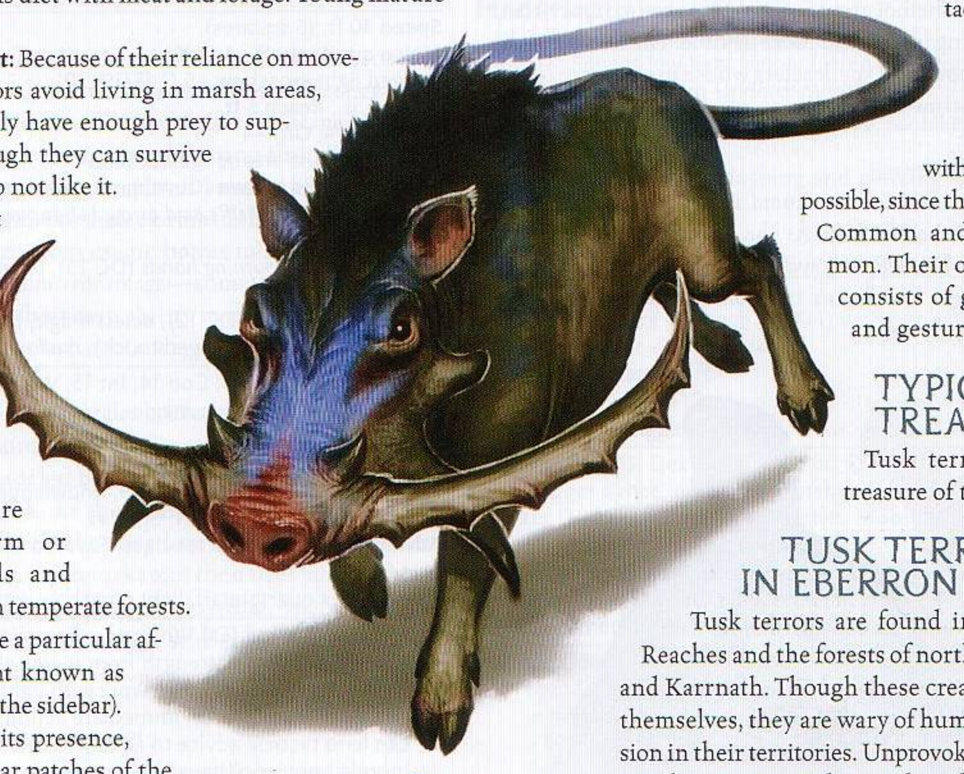
Environment: Because of their reliance on movement, tusk terrors avoid living in marsh areas, and deserts rarely have enough prey to support them. Though they can survive the cold, they do not like it.

Terrain that provides cover and slows other creatures down is a tusk terror's preferred environment. As such, they are found in warm or temperate hills and mountains, or in temperate forests. Tusk terrors have a particular affinity for a plant known as weary grass (see the sidebar). They can sense its presence, and they live near patches of the strange herb when they can.

Tusk terrors prefer to lair in places that allow for defense and have ample escape routes. Packs of tusk terrors typically lair in the open, setting watches against intruders.

Typical Physical Characteristics: Tusk terrors are larger than normal boars, about 6 feet long and weighing 500 pounds. They stand 4 feet high at the shoulder. Unlike a boar, a tusk terror has a flexible tail as long as its body, used for balance as it tumbles and jumps. Its fur is a mottled green and brown under normal circumstances, but displays bright red and blue patches when the creature signals aggression.

Alignment: Unorganized and unpredictable, tusk terrors have little concern for any creatures but themselves. As a result, nearly all are chaotic neutral.



Tusk terror

SOCIETY

Tusk terrors resent hierarchies of any kind, and young leave the care of their parents as soon as they are able. Packs of up to six tusk terrors are common, but such groups typically stay together only a few weeks before one tusk terror begins to assert dominance and breaks the pack apart. As long as a pack survives, tusk terrors are highly cooperative, coordinating their attacks in combat and sleeping in shifts at night.

Negotiation with a tusk terror is possible, since they understand Common and Undercommon. Their own language consists of grunts, roars, and gestures.

TYPICAL TREASURE

Tusk terrors have no treasure of their own.

TUSK TERRORS IN EBERRON

Tusk terrors are found in the Eldeen Reaches and the forests of northern Aundair and Karrnath. Though these creatures keep to themselves, they are wary of humanoid expansion in their territories. Unprovoked tusk terror attacks against settlers and explorers are not uncommon. Tusk terrors also roam the Blackcap Mountains in Breland, with adventurers claiming that packs of these creatures actively guard a mountain pass on the Aundair frontier. Why they do so is unknown.

TUSK TERRORS IN FAERÛN

Tusk terrors are found in the Vilhon Reach, particularly the Chondalwood and the Cloven Mountains. They favor the worship of Lurue, although the less chaotic favor Nobanion. Tusk terrors in Faerûn tend toward good as a result, but they also count more than a few worshipers of Malar among their number. The tusk terrors of the Chondalwood have an understanding with the wild elves and ghostwise halflings of that place, and all stay out of each other's territories.

Illus. by J. Chan

WEARY GRASS

Weary grass looks like normal range grass but secretes a debilitating contact poison. When they can, tusk terrors stake their territories in areas where it grows, since it is low-lying and they can easily jump over it. A DC 30 Spot check allows a character to notice weary grass within an area of normal grass. A DC 20 Knowledge (nature) check allows it to be identified.

Weary Grass Poison: Contact, Fortitude DC 17, fatigued/fatigued.

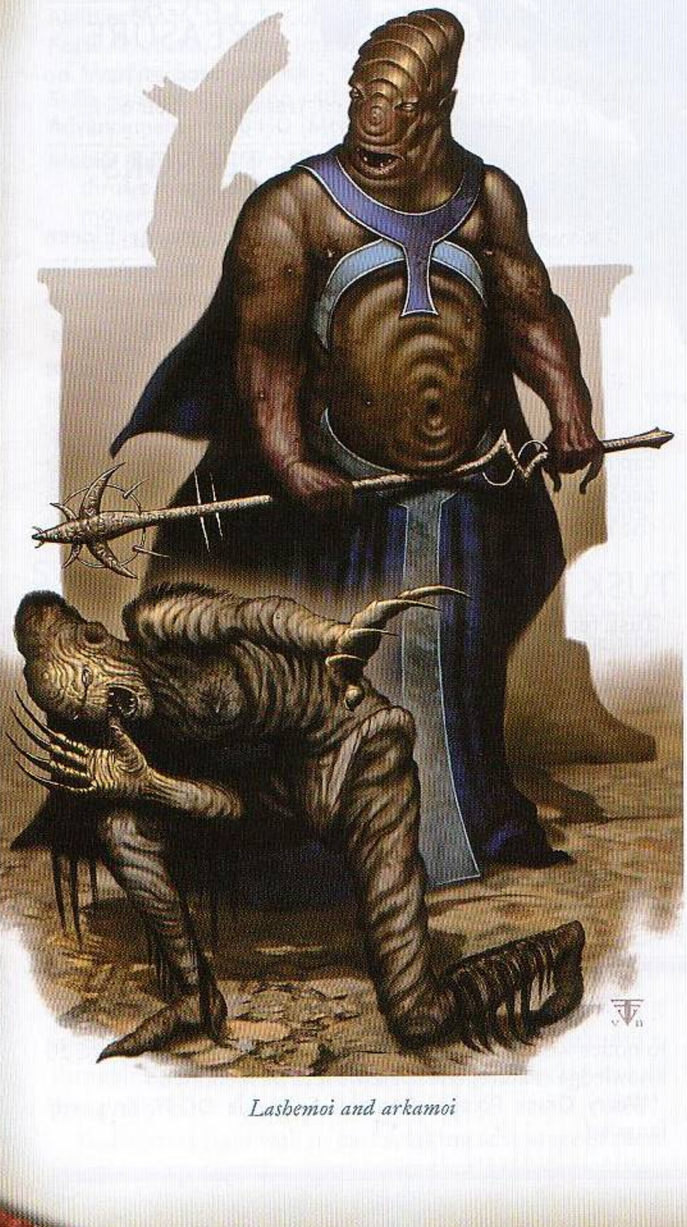
USHEMOI

The ushemoi are a strange race whose members gain increased strength, speed, or arcane power when exposed to different stimuli. The simplest ushemoi grow tougher and stronger as they take damage in combat. Their bodies undergo a powerful physical change, granting them superior prowess even as their skin toughens to the strength of metal armor. Other ushemoi grow faster in response to injury, their limbs becoming longer and more flexible. The leaders of the ushemoi are powerful spellcasters whose magic increases in potency each time it is used.

ARKAMOI

This bald, gray-skinned humanoid is clad in blue robes that barely cover its portly body. As the skin across its head and face undulates like rippling water, it clutches an ornate staff with soft fingers and begins to intone eldritch phrases in a rumbling voice.

Illus. by F. Vohwinkel



Lashemoi and arkamoi

ARKAMOI **CR 4**
Usually NE Medium monstrous humanoid
Init +2; **Senses** low-light vision; Listen +1, Spot +1
Languages Common, Draconic, Undercommon

AC 14, touch 12, flat-footed 12
(+2 Dex, +2 natural)
hp 29 (4 HD); **DR** 5/slashing or piercing
SR 14
Fort +3, **Ref** +6, **Will** +5

Speed 30 ft. (6 squares)
Melee quarterstaff +4 (1d6)
Ranged light crossbow +6 (1d8/19–20)
Space 5 ft.; **Reach** 5 ft.
Base Atk +4; **Grp** +4
Special Actions arcane mastermind
Sorcerer Spells Known (CL 4th); strength from magic:
2nd (5/day)—*Melf's acid arrow* (+6 ranged touch), *mirror image*
1st (7/day)—*burning hands* (DC 13), *disguise self, jump, mage armor*
0 (6/day)—*daze* (DC 12), *detect magic, flare* (DC 12), *light, ray of frost* (+6 ranged touch), *read magic*

Abilities Str 11, Dex 15, Con 14, Int 15, Wis 12, Cha 15
SA spells, strength from magic
SQ arcane talent
Feats Combat Casting, Toughness
Skills Concentration +9, Hide +9, Knowledge (arcana) +9, Listen +1, Spellcraft +11, Spot +1
Advancement by character class; **Favored Class** sorcerer; see text
Possessions quarterstaff, light crossbow with 20 bolts

Arcane Mastermind (Ex) When an arkamoi's bonus to spell save DCs from its strength from magic ability is +3 or higher, its mind begins to work with lightning precision. Once per round, as an immediate action, the arkamoi can lend tactical advice to an ally. This effect grants a +2 morale bonus on that ally's next check, attack roll, or damage roll.

Strength from Magic (Ex) Each time an arkamoi casts an arcane spell, magical feedback grants it a rush of power. For each arcane spell cast, an arkamoi increases the save DC of subsequent arcane spells it casts by 1. Additionally, the arkamoi gains a +2 bonus on damage rolls for subsequent spells, and gains a +2 deflection bonus to AC. These benefits last for 1 minute starting in the round during which the arkamoi finishes casting its first spell of the encounter.

Bonuses stack each time an arkamoi casts an arcane spell within that minute, to a maximum of a +5 bonus to save DCs, a +10 bonus on damage rolls, and a +10 deflection bonus to AC. At the end of that minute, all these bonuses disappear. They could begin accumulating again if the arkemoi casts more spells.

Arcane Talent (Ex) An arkamoi casts spells as a 4th-level sorcerer.

Arkamoi are the thinkers, leaders, and arcane spellcasters of the ushemoi. They have an innate ability for arcane magic, and their keen minds allow them to lead with ruthless efficiency. Though arkamoi are physically weaker than others of their kind, the other ushemoi take a deferential attitude toward them. Lashemoi and turlemoi are happy to acquiesce to the arkamoi's natural leadership, while hadrimoi recognize the arkamoi as savvy commanders with a knack for turning a situation to their advantage.

When an arkamoi casts spells, for a time the energy flowing through its body sharpens its mind and improves each spell it subsequently casts. As its spellcasting skill soars, an arkamoi becomes increasingly deadly.

Strategies and Tactics

Arkamoi prefer to build their arcane energies by first picking away at the enemy with their lesser spells, particularly *ray of frost* and *daze.* As their spellcasting ability improves, they unleash *Melf's acid arrow* and *burning hands.* Though arkamoi are ill suited to melee combat, their damage reduction and strength from magic bonus to AC—augmented by *mage armor* and *mirror image*—sometimes makes them overconfident in their own ability to avoid harm. As such, they push to the front lines in ways that traditional sorcerers do not.

One of the most useful talents of arkamoi is their ability to plan a battle around their kin's strengths and weaknesses. A band of ushemoi led by an arkamoi might use hadrimoi to spring an attack. As the hadrimoi gain speed but lose their stomach for battle, they lure the enemy toward an ambush of turlemoi. The arkamoi then uses *burning hands* to harm as many turlemoi as possible, increasing the strength of its brutish troops while improving its own spellcasting ability.

Arkamoi with Class Levels

Sorcerer is the favored class of arkamoi. As an associated class, levels in sorcerer stack with an arkamoi's innate spellcasting ability. Levels in other classes (even spellcasting classes) are not associated.

Level Adjustment: +4.

ARKAMOI LORE

Characters who have ranks in Knowledge (nature) can learn more about arkamoi. When a character makes a successful skill check, the following lore is revealed, including the information from lower DCs.

Knowledge (Nature)

DC	Result
14	This gray-skinned creature is an arkamoi, one of the spellcasters and leaders of the ushemoi. This result reveals all monstrous humanoid traits.
19	An arkamoi has the natural talents of a sorcerer, but its magic becomes more potent with each spell it casts.
24	An arkamoi's ever-increasing spellcasting power also makes it harder to hit. Arkamoi at the peak of their spellcasting power can direct their allies to greater efficiency in combat.

HADRIMOI

A thin, lithe humanoid darts from cover as you strain to catch a glimpse of it. Its skin is composed of fibrous tendrils, and two red eyes and a fanged mouth dominate its face. Both its arms split off into separate limbs just below the elbow, and in each of its four hands it spins a dagger with practiced ease.

HADRIMOI CR 5

Usually NE Medium monstrous humanoid
Init +8; **Senses** low-light vision; Listen +4, Spot +4
Languages Common, Undercommon

AC 14, touch 14, flat-footed 10; Dodge, Mobility (+4 Dex)
hp 58 (9 HD); **DR** 10/slashing and piercing; speed from pain
Fort +5, **Ref** +10, **Will** +7
Weakness falling courage

Speed 30 ft. (6 squares)
Melee 4 daggers +13 each (1d4+1) with perfect symmetry
Ranged dagger +13/+8 (1d4+1)
Space 5 ft.; **Reach** 5 ft.
Base Atk +9; **Grp** +10
Atk Options dagger dance

Abilities Str 13, Dex 18, Con 14, Int 12, Wis 13, Cha 11
SA dagger dance, perfect symmetry, speed from pain
Feats Dodge, Improved Initiative, Mobility, Weapon Finesse
Skills Hide +13, Jump +7, Listen +4, Move Silently +13, Sleight of Hand +10, Spot +4
Advancement by character class; **Favored Class** rogue

Speed from Pain (Ex) Each time a hadrimoi takes damage, the fibrous tendrils that make up its body become increasingly elastic and responsive. The hadrimoi gains a +2 dodge bonus to AC, a +1 bonus on attack rolls and Reflex saves, and a +10-foot bonus to its land speed. These benefits last for 1 minute starting in the round during which a hadrimoi first takes damage in the encounter.

Bonuses stack each time a hadrimoi takes damage, to a maximum of a +10 dodge bonus to AC, a +5 bonus on attack rolls and Reflex saves, and a +50-foot bonus to land speed. These bonuses accrue each time a hadrimoi takes damage during that minute, even from multiple attacks in the same round. At the end of that minute, all these bonuses disappear. They could begin accumulating again if the hadremoi takes more damage.

Falling Courage (Ex) A hadrimoi whose bonus to speed from its speed from pain ability is +30 feet or higher takes a –4 penalty on saves against fear effects and on the level check made to oppose an Intimidate check. In addition, when in this state, a hadrimoi can be affected by fear effects that do not normally affect creatures of its Hit Dice.

Perfect Symmetry (Ex) As a full attack, a hadrimoi can attack with up to four light weapons with no penalty on attack rolls. If it tries to use heavier weapons, it can make multiple attacks only according to its base attack bonus, and it takes the normal penalties for attacking with two or more weapons.

Dagger Dance (Ex) As a hadrimoi converts its pain to superior agility, it can perform a deadly attack. When a hadrimoi's bonus to speed from its speed from pain ability is +30 feet or higher, the creature can move up to its speed as part of a full attack. It can move before, after, or between each of its attacks, as long as its total movement in the round does not exceed its speed.

The wandering hadrimoi are shiftless vagabonds willing to do nearly anything to earn a little coin or a meal. Though their monstrous appearance prevents them from moving openly in human society, they thrive in the shadowy corners of the criminal underworld, where their innate speed and agility make them excellent thugs and assassins.

Hadrimoi gather in small bands, hoping to better defend against their enemies. When found in these traveling groups, they typically have a few turlemoi along as enforcers. Unlike their larger cousins, hadrimoi have a nasty nature in and out of combat. They take advantage of the turlemoi's natural cowardice to cow them into submission.

As a hadrimoi takes damage, it grows taller and thinner. The grooves in its skin become smooth as its body fills out to its full size. In this form, a hadrimoi gains great speed and agility.

Strategies and Tactics

A hadrimoi attack is a sudden blur of steel that leaves vicious dagger wounds in its wake. However, though hadrimoi are aggressive, they are inherent cowards even before their falling courage takes effect. They prefer to attack from ambush, but if a battle turns against them, they use their superior speed to flee.

Hadrimoi are careful to avoid getting bogged down in a fight. Though they place survival above winning, they never enter a battle unless they are sure that the reward of victory outweighs the risk of defeat.

HADRIMOI LORE

Characters who have ranks in Knowledge (nature) can learn more about hadrimoi. When a character makes a successful skill check, the following lore is revealed, including the information from lower DCs.

Knowledge (Nature)

DC	Result
15	This creature is a hadrimoi, one of a race called the ushemoi. Hadrimoi are subtle combatants, relying on stealth and speed to overcome their foes.
20	Hadrimoi are the scouts, spies, and assassins of the ushemoi. Their arms split into two limbs each, allowing them to fight with four weapons.
25	As they take damage, hadrimoi become faster, more agile, and increasingly deadly in combat. At its peak, a hadrimoi can move at full speed while making four dagger attacks during its turn.

A foiled hadrimoi is a dangerous foe. Though vanquished orcs and goblins might simply run for their lives and seek out easier targets in the future, hadrimoi ruminate over every defeat. Plotting endless schemes of revenge despite their cowardice, hadrimoi return again and again to fight those who have bested them. More than one adventuring band has defeated a group of hadrimoi in battle only to find themselves targeted by poison, ambush, and attacks against allies and loved ones. To defeat a hadrimoi and let it live is to create a lifelong enemy.

Hadrimoi with Class Levels

Hadrimoi usually advance as rogues. That class, the fighter class, and the ranger class are considered associated for hadrimoi.

Level Adjustment: +4.

LASHEMOI

This gaunt humanoid's wrinkled gray skin seems too ample for its body. A plume of ragged hair hangs from the back of its skull, and patches of its skin are also hairy. It crouches low, snarling as long claws extend from its fingers.

LASHEMOI **CR 1**

Usually NE Medium monstrous humanoid
Init +0; **Senses** low-light vision; Listen +0, Spot +2
Languages Common

AC 12, touch 10, flat-footed 12
(+2 natural)
hp 15 (2 HD); **DR** 5/slashing or piercing; lesser strength from pain
Fort +3, **Ref** +3, **Will** +3
Weakness broken courage

Speed 30 ft. (6 squares)
Melee 2 claws +4 each (1d4+1)
Space 5 ft.; **Reach** 5 ft.
Base Atk +2; **Grp** +3

Abilities Str 12, Dex 11, Con 16, Int 5, Wis 11, Cha 8
SA lesser strength from pain
Feats Weapon Focus (claw)
Skills Hide +3, Listen+0, Spot +2
Advancement by character class; **Favored Class** barbarian

Broken Courage (Ex) A lashemoi takes a –4 penalty on saves against fear effects and on the level check made to oppose an Intimidate check. In addition, a lashemoi can be affected by fear effects that do not normally affect creatures of its Hit Dice.

Lesser Strength from Pain (Ex) Whenever a lashemoi takes damage from any source, it gains a +1 bonus on attack rolls, a +1 bonus on damage rolls, and its natural armor bonus to AC increases by 1. These benefits last for 1 minute starting in the round during which a lashemoi first takes damage in the encounter.

Bonuses stack each time a lashemoi takes damage, to a maximum of a +5 bonus on attack rolls, a +5 bonus on damage rolls, and a +5 natural armor bonus to AC. These bonuses accrue each time a lashemoi takes damage during that minute, even from multiple attacks in the same round. At the end of that minute, all these bonuses disappear. They could begin accumulating again if the lashemoi takes more damage.

Lashemoi are the drudge workers, low-ranking warriors, and servitors of ushemoi society. Though lashemoi typically toil under the direction of arkamoi and hadrimoi leaders, turlemoi sometimes gather lashemoi to them as hunters, scouts, and expendable advance troops.

Without leadership, lashemoi keep to themselves. Though they attack other creatures for food and treasure, they are meek, cowardly, and easily driven off. Lashemoi avoid stand-up fights even against weaker foes and are typically content to take potshots at soft, easy targets.

Lashemoi have a natural connection to their ushemoi brethren, but they are just as likely to be found in the service of ogre mages, hobgoblin chieftains, evil clerics, and the like. Other ushemoi refer to lashemoi as "mongrels," not because of their heritage, but for the lashemoi's tendency to follow any charismatic creature.

Strategies and Tactics

Lashemoi are built for simple tactics. They rush forward and attempt to overwhelm their enemies with raw numbers, relying on their lesser strength from pain ability to amplify their fighting prowess. Superior odds and a clear escape route are the lashemoi's only concerns in combat. If these are not present, lashemoi are unlikely to fight unless pressed.

Lashemoi gain a deep, satisfying emotional rush from their lesser strength from pain ability. As a lashemoi takes damage, it enters an increasingly ecstatic state. As a result, lashemoi that are lightly wounded can assess a potential loss and flee from it, but those that have taken grievous injuries typically fight to the death. Lashemoi that are not badly injured use their allies' battle lust to cover their own retreat.

LASHEMOI LORE

Characters who have ranks in Knowledge (nature) can learn more about lashemoi. When a character makes a successful skill check, the following lore is revealed, including the information from lower DCs.

Knowledge (Nature)

DC	Result
11	Lashemoi are strange creatures that become stronger and tougher as they take damage in combat. They are the weakest form of a race called the ushemoi. This result reveals all monstrous humanoid traits.
16	Lashemoi are especially susceptible to fear and intimidation, but the longer they stay in combat, the more fiercely they fight.
21	The more damage a lashemoi takes, the greater its combat prowess becomes. Opponents are sometimes lulled into a false sense of security by these creatures' relative weakness, only to be overcome by their sudden deadly ferocity.

Lashemoi under the command of an organized leader are willing and eager servants. They are easily bullied, and their naturally timid and cowardly nature is easily overcome with sufficient prodding and training. Powerful creatures such as ogre mages love to use lashemoi as disposable shock troops. This allows them to reserve their less expendable followers until enemies are softened up by lashemoi forces taking damage, growing stronger, and fighting to the death.

Lashemoi with Class Levels

Lashemoi favor the barbarian class. That class is considered associated for lashemoi.

Level Adjustment: +2.

TURLEMOI

The tall humanoid lumbering toward you resembles a giant stripped of its skin, leaving glistening, bloody muscle exposed to the air. As it moves closer, you see that its form consists of thick, knotted tendrils of flesh. Its body twitches and twists, seeming to expand and solidify as it attacks.

TURLEMOI **CR 8**

Usually NE Large monstrous humanoid
Init +6; **Senses** low-light vision; Listen +7, Spot +7
Languages Common

AC 14, touch 11, flat-footed 12
(–1 size, +2 Dex, +3 natural)
hp 102 (12 HD); **DR** 10/slashing or piercing; strength from pain
Immune rising courage
Fort +8, **Ref** +10, **Will** +10
Weakness broken courage

Speed 40 ft. (8 squares), climb 30 ft.
Melee 2 slams +15 each (2d6+3)
Ranged rock +13 (1d8+3)
Space 10 ft.; **Reach** 10 ft.
Base Atk +12; **Grp** +19
Atk Options Combat Reflexes, Power Attack

Abilities Str 17, Dex 14, Con 18, Int 7, Wis 15, Cha 6
SA rock throwing, strength from pain
Feats Alertness, Combat Reflexes, Improved Initiative, Power Attack, Weapon Focus (slam)
Skills Balance +5, Climb +11, Jump +10, Listen +7, Spot +7, Survival +5
Advancement by character class; **Favored Class** barbarian

Rising Courage (Ex) When a turlemoi's bonus on attack rolls from its strength from pain ability is +3 or higher, it becomes immune to all mind-affecting spells and abilities. In such a state, turlemoi do not retreat from combat.

Broken Courage (Ex) A turlemoi takes a –4 penalty on saves against fear effects and on the level check made to oppose an Intimidate check. In addition, a turlemoi can be affected by fear effects that do not normally affect creatures of its Hit Dice.

Rock Throwing (Ex) Like giants, turlemoi are accomplished rock throwers. A turlemoi can hurl rocks of 20 to 30 pounds (Tiny objects) up to five range increments. The range increment is 60 feet for a turlemoi's thrown rocks.

Strength from Pain (Ex) Whenever a turlemoi takes damage from any source, it gains a +1 bonus on attack rolls, a +2 bonus on damage rolls, and its natural armor bonus to AC increases by 2. These benefits last for 1 minute starting in the round during which a turlemoi first takes damage in the encounter.

Bonuses stack each time a turlemoi takes damage, to a maximum of a +5 bonus on attack rolls, a +10 bonus on damage rolls, and a +10 natural armor bonus to AC. These bonuses accrue each time a turlemoi takes damage during that minute, even from multiple attacks in the same round. At the end of that minute, all these bonuses disappear. They could begin accumulating again if the turlemoi takes more damage.

Turlemoi are the largest of the ushemoi. Solitary creatures, they wander the wilderness and the back roads in search of food or easy prey. As a turlemoi takes damage, its tendrils of flesh fuse into a crimson shell that covers its body. A turlemoi that has sustained several injuries looks like a giant with a smooth, blood-red hide.

A turlemoi's personality also changes as its body transforms. Though it starts out meek and fearful, it becomes more confident and wrathful the more damage it takes. Though other creatures might start a fight with confidence and flee when they are injured, turlemoi do the opposite. Once committed to combat, a turlemoi fights to the death.

Other ushemoi sometimes corner and capture lone turlemoi to serve as warrior-slaves. Turlemoi are driven forward from the front ranks with longspears, attaining a peak of fearless battle fury as they reach the enemy.

Strategies and Tactics

Turlemoi might be brutes, but they have an instinctive cunning. Some carry stones and clubs, bashing themselves with these weapons to summon their strength of pain before combat is joined. The rush of power more than offsets the discomfort of their injuries. A turlemoi is typically too timid to injure itself, though, and only imminent threats push it to such action.

TURLEMOI LORE

Characters who have ranks in Knowledge (nature) can learn more about turlemoi. When a character makes a successful skill check, the following lore is revealed, including the information from lower DCs.

Knowledge (Nature)

DC	Result
18	This creature is a turlemoi, one of a race called the ushemoi. Turlemoi are hulking brawlers, and they have a reputation for fighting to the death.
23	Though turlemoi are the largest and strongest of the ushemoi, they are naturally cowardly. However, they grow in strength and courage as they take damage, so those hoping to overcome these brutes in combat must do so quickly.
28	Turlemoi in combat eventually become immune to fear, though they are initially more susceptible to it than other creatures.

Given time, a turlemoi looks for a good place to set up an ambush. However, even with their excellent natural agility, turlemoi have little skill for such tactics. But they like to ensure that the enemy is within melee range when a battle begins.

Turlemoi with Class Levels

Like lashemoi, turlemoi favor the barbarian class, but some advance as fighters instead. Both these classes are considered associated for turlemoi.

Level Adjustment: +4.

SAMPLE ENCOUNTERS

Though they can be encountered individually, ushemoi are just as often found in mixed groups that take advantage of their racial abilities.

Wizard's Bodyguard (EL 4): A lone arkamoi acts as courier and bodyguard to an influential necromancer, using *disguise self* to take on the appearance of a young apprentice. PCs attempting to recover a relic from the necromancer's sanctum—or who are in possession of an item the necromancer desires—find themselves shadowed by this apparent stripling. However, the characters are in for an unpleasant surprise when the arkamoi unleashes the escalating power of its magic.

Thick as Thieves (EL 8): Three hadrimoi have banded together to take over a rural village. By threatening farmers and merchants, the hadrimoi have built up a widespread protection racket and created a comfortable life for themselves. They take a hard line against characters who might threaten their operation, including any PCs who happen to pass through town.

Brute Force (EL 9): A group of three lashemoi serves under a turlemoi chief that has learned to master its inherent cowardice with self-inflicted wounds to activate its strength from pain. This group operates along the trade roads, attacking small caravans and parties on foot. From cover, the turlemoi uses its rock throwing to take out escort guards. It then sends the lashemoi in to soften up any remaining defenses before wading into the fray.

War Party (EL 10): This band of ushemoi consists of eight lashemoi servants, an arkamoi leader, a hadrimoi scout, and a turlemoi brute. Along a lonely stretch of forest road, the arkamoi dispatches the hadrimoi to find promising targets and attack. The hadrimoi then flees in an effort to lure its targets into the war party's ambush.

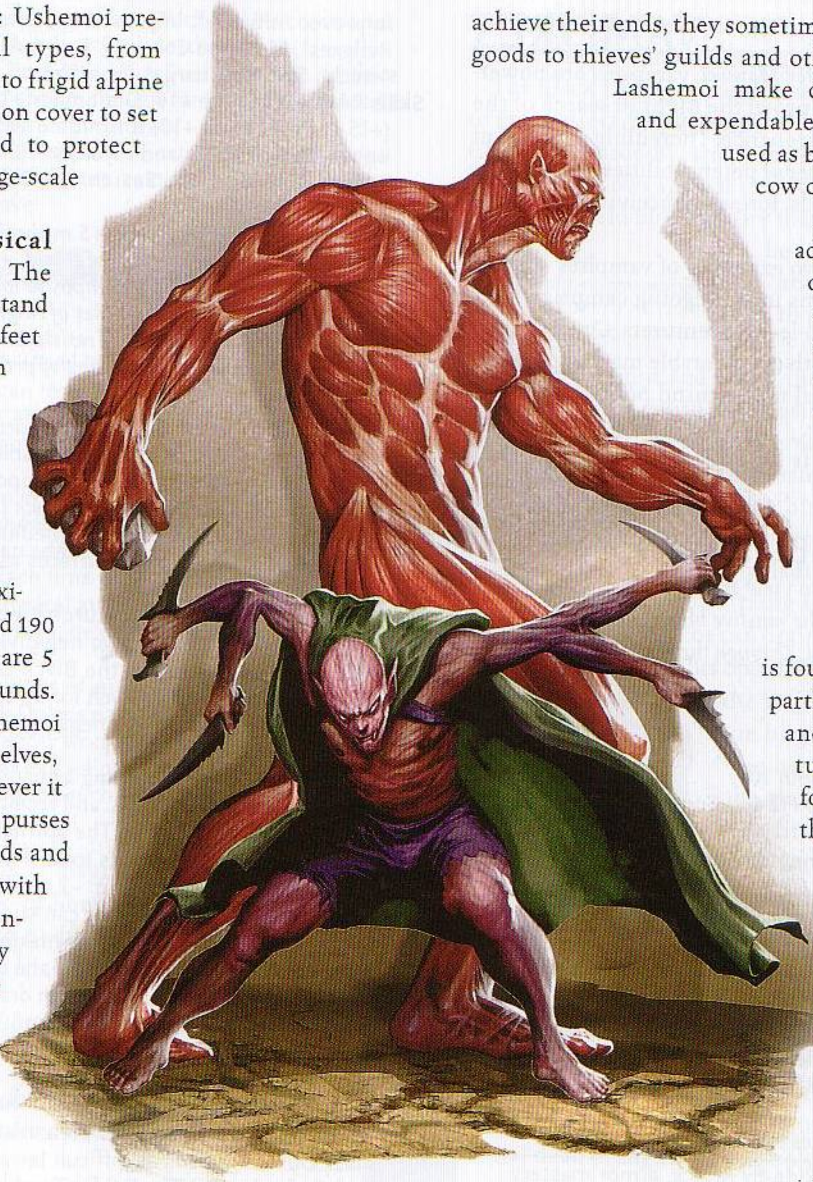
ECOLOGY

The ushemoi are a nomadic race. They lack the desire to form permanent settlements even as they are compelled to keep moving to avoid the attention of their former victims.

Environment: Ushemoi prefer forests of all types, from steaming jungles to frigid alpine climes. They rely on cover to set up ambushes and to protect them from any large-scale retaliation.

Typical Physical Characteristics: The brawny turlemoi stand approximately 9 feet tall and can weigh 1,000 pounds. Hadrimoi are lithe and light, standing 6 feet tall and weighing 150 pounds. Arkamoi are approximately 6 feet tall and 190 pounds. Lashemoi are 5 feet tall and 130 pounds.

Alignment: Ushemoi care only for themselves, willing to do whatever it takes to fill their purses or secure their needs and desires. They ally with others out of convenience, but they are just as likely to betray allies for short-term gain. They are neutral evil.



Turlemoi and hadrimoi

Illus. by J. Zhang

SOCIETY

Ushemoi form ragtag groups that wander the forests and jungles of unsettled frontier lands. They rarely form organized permanent settlements, and even arkamoi prefer a life of wandering. To the ushemoi mind, the best defense is to keep as far from potential foes as possible. By constantly roving, ushemoi stay one step ahead of the retribution their depredations would otherwise inspire.

Ushemoi have a caste society as befits their four types. Arkamoi are natural leaders and thinkers, and small cabals of arkamoi direct the other ushemoi. Hadrimoi are schemers and merchants. Though they prefer to use violence to achieve their ends, they sometimes trade stolen and looted goods to thieves' guilds and other shady organizations. Lashemoi make dependable grunt labor and expendable warriors. Turlemoi are used as brutal troops or threats to cow others.

As a group, ushemoi are adept at blending into societies that are forgiving of their strange appearance. Hobgoblins and other monstrous races use the simpler turlemoi and lashemoi as mercenaries or slaves. The more intelligent hadrimoi and arkamoi work with other creatures as hirelings or allies.

Little sense of loyalty is found among the ushemoi, particularly between arkamoi and hadrimoi. These creatures constantly jockey for power, even betraying their own kind to aid non-ushemoi if the price is right. Other evil humanoids might dream of conquest for the greater glory of their culture or deities, but the ushemoi look out only for individual interests. The idea of the ushemoi as a unified race is alien to them.

TYPICAL TREASURE

Ushemoi covet treasure for the comforts and power it can buy them. A skilled arkamoi sorcerer might live in luxury as a mercenary spellcaster within a drow city, and even the dim-witted lashemoi recognize that coins buy sustenance. Because they are constantly on the move, ushemoi favor highly portable treasure. They have standard treasure for their Challenge Rating. Those ushemoi that have class levels have standard equipment for an NPC of their Challenge Rating.

VAMPIRES

As described in the *Monster Manual*, vampires are powerful undead creatures that prowl the night in search of the blood that gives them sustenance. Incredibly intelligent and equipped with a number of potent abilities, they are the definitive evil masterminds, forever conceiving ever more nefarious plots.

This section presents two examples of vampires suitable for use as recurring villains in an ongoing campaign or as potent adversaries for high-level adventurers. One is a more straightforward threat with considerable martial prowess, and the other is a criminal mastermind potentially at the center of a web of intrigue.

The vampire template is described on page 250 of the *Monster Manual*.

THE BLACK DUKE

A mighty warrior steps into view through the fog, adorned in gleaming mithral armor. The massive blue blade in his hands is wrapped with tendrils of mist. Through the grate of his wolf-shaped helm, the dark figure laughs.

THE BLACK DUKE — CR 19

Male vampire knight 7*/ronin 10*
* Classes described in *PH2* and *Complete Warrior* respectively
CE Medium undead (augmented humanoid)
Init +8; **Senses** darkvision 60 ft.; Listen +11, Spot +11
Languages Common, Draconic, Infernal

AC 42, touch 19, flat-footed 38; Dodge, shield block +1 (+4 Dex, +10 armor, +7 shield, +4 deflection, +1 insight, +6 natural)
hp 110 (17 HD); fast healing 5; **DR** 10/magic and silver
Immune undead immunities
Resist cold 10, electricity 10, +4 turn resistance
Fort +12, **Ref** +14, **Will** +12
Weakness vampire weaknesses (*MM* 253)

Speed 30 ft. (6 squares); Ride-By Attack, armor mastery (medium), spider climb
Melee *+4 keen frost bastard sword* +29/+24/+19/+14 (1d10+12/17–20 plus 1d6 cold) or
Melee slam +29 (1d6+12 plus energy drain)
Ranged *+2 seeking composite longbow* +23/+18/+13/+8 (1d8+7/×3)
Base Atk +17; **Grp** +33
Atk Options Cleave, Combat Reflexes, Great Cleave, Mounted Combat, Power Attack, Spirited Charge, Trample, banzai charge, blood drain, bulwark of defense, magic strike, sneak attack +4d6, vigilant defender
Special Actions alternate form, children of the night, create spawn, dominating gaze, gaseous form, shield ally
Combat Gear *2 potions of inflict light wounds, potion of inflict moderate wounds*

Abilities Str 27, Dex 18, Con —, Int 14, Wis 12, Cha 17
SA blood drain, children of the night, create spawn, dominating gaze, energy drain, magic strike, sneak attack
SQ infamy
Feats Ability Focus (dominating gaze), Alertness^{B}, Cleave, Combat Reflexes^{B}, Dodge^{B}, Exotic Weapon Proficiency (bastard sword), Great Cleave, Improved Grapple, Improved Initiative^{B}, Improved Unarmed Strike, Lightning Reflexes^{B}, Mounted Combat^{B}, Power Attack, Ride-By Attack^{B}, Spirited Charge^{B}, Trample^{B}
Skills Bluff +21, Climb +16, Diplomacy +11, Disguise +13 (+15 acting), Hide +10, Intimidate +25, Jump +12, Knowledge (nobility and royalty) +12, Listen +11, Move Silently +10, Ride +24, Search +10, Sense Motive +19, Spot +11
Possessions combat gear plus *+5 mithral breastplate, +5 undead controlling heavy steel shield, +4 keen frost bastard sword, +2 seeking composite longbow* (+5 Str bonus) with 20 arrows, *amulet of mighty fists +4, belt of giant strength +6, cloak of resistance +3, gloves of Dexterity +2, howling helm, ring of protection +4, dusty rose ioun stone*

Shield Block (Ex) On the Black Duke's turn, he can designate a single opponent and increase his shield bonus to AC by 1 against all attacks made by that opponent.

Armor Mastery (Medium) (Ex) The Black Duke does not reduce his speed when wearing medium armor.

Spider Climb (Ex) Climb sheer surfaces as though with a *spider climb* spell.

Energy Drain (Su) Living creatures hit by the Black Duke's slam attack gain two negative levels. For each negative level bestowed, the Black Duke gains 5 temporary hit points that last for up to 1 hour. DC 21 Fortitude save to remove a negative level. The save DC is Charisma-based.

Banzai Charge (Ex) When making a charge, the Black Duke can take a penalty to his AC and receive an equivalent bonus on the damage roll. The normal –2 AC penalty for charging applies and counts toward the bonus. The Black Duke can take a penalty from –2 to –17.

Blood Drain (Ex) The Black Duke can suck blood from a living victim with his fangs by making a successful grapple check. If he pins the foe, he drains blood, dealing 1d4 points of Constitution drain each round the pin is maintained. On each successful blood drain, the Black Duke gains 5 temporary hit points that last for up to 1 hour.

Bulwark of Defense (Ex) An opponent that begins its turn in the Black Duke's threatened area treats all squares the Black Duke threatens as difficult terrain.

Vigilant Defender (Ex) The DC for Tumble checks made to move through a space threatened or occupied by the Black Duke increases by 7.

Alternate Form (Su) The Black Duke can assume the form of a bat, dire bat, wolf, or dire wolf as a standard action. When in his alternate form, the Black Duke loses his natural slam attack and dominating gaze ability, but he gains the natural weapons and extraordinary special attacks of his new form. The Black Duke can remain in bat, dire bat, wolf, or dire wolf form until he chooses to assume a new form or until the next sunrise.

Children of the Night (Su) Once per day, the Black Duke can call 1d6+1 rat swarms, 1d4+1 bat swarms, or a pack of 3d6 wolves. These creatures arrive in 2d6 rounds and serve the Black Duke for 1 hour.

Create Spawn (Su) A humanoid or monstrous humanoid slain by the Black Duke's energy drain rises as a vampire spawn 1d4 days after burial. If the Black Duke instead drains the victim's Constitution to 0 or lower, the victim returns as a spawn if it had 4 or fewer HD and as a vampire if it had 5 or more HD. In either case, the new vampire or spawn is under the Black Duke's command and remains enslaved until his destruction.

At any given time, the Black Duke can have no more than 34 enslaved spawn, though vampires he creates can have enslaved spawn of their own.

Dominating Gaze (Su) As the *dominate person* spell, range 30 feet, Will DC 22 negates, caster level 12th. The save DC is Charisma-based.

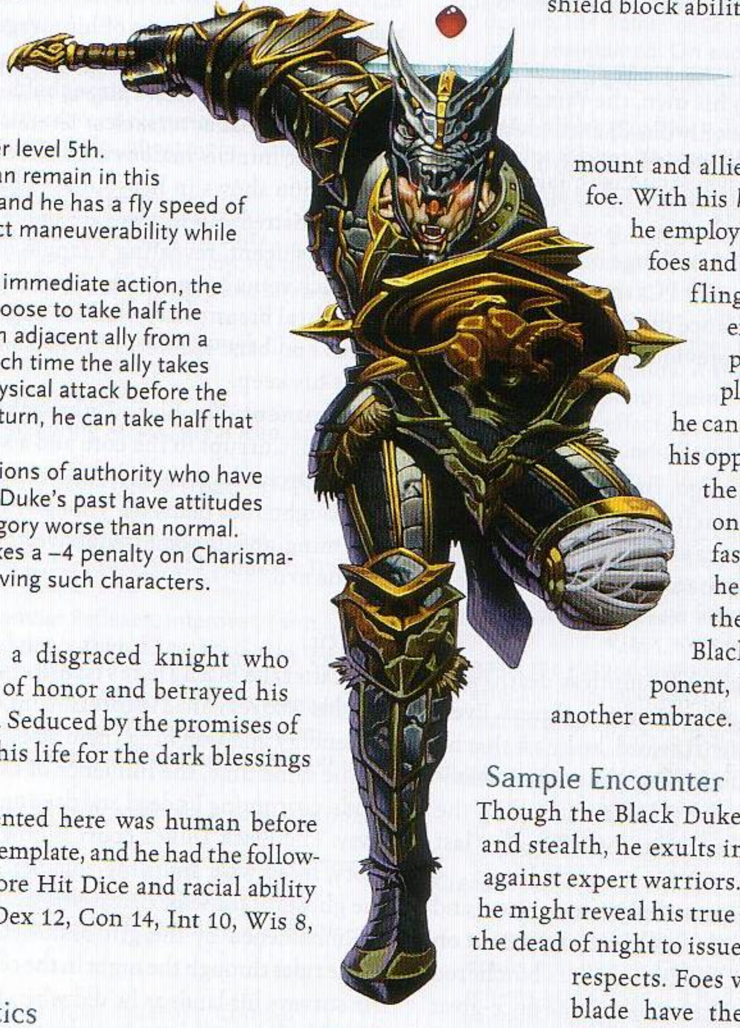
Gaseous Form (Su) As the *gaseous form* spell; at will; caster level 5th. The Black Duke can remain in this form indefinitely, and he has a fly speed of 20 feet with perfect maneuverability while in gaseous form.

Shield Ally (Ex) As an immediate action, the Black Duke can choose to take half the damage dealt to an adjacent ally from a physical attack. Each time the ally takes damage from a physical attack before the Black Duke's next turn, he can take half that damage himself.

Infamy Those in positions of authority who have heard of the Black Duke's past have attitudes that start one category worse than normal. The Black Duke takes a –4 penalty on Charisma-based checks involving such characters.

The Black Duke is a disgraced knight who abandoned his code of honor and betrayed his people centuries ago. Seduced by the promises of Orcus, he cast aside his life for the dark blessings of undeath.

The vampire presented here was human before gaining the vampire template, and he had the following ability scores before Hit Dice and racial ability adjustments: Str 15, Dex 12, Con 14, Int 10, Wis 8, Cha 13.



The Black Duke

Strategies and Tactics

When the Black Duke encounters a suitable foe, he halts his entourage and issues a challenge. If a foe agrees to test his skills in combat, the knight fights that adversary fairly at the start. However, if a foe threatens to best him, the Black Duke betrays his honor and calls for assistance from his comrades.

The Black Duke exploits his cauchemar nightmare steed to great effect, delivering terrible attacks using Spirited Charge and Ride-By Attack to prevent his opponents from landing blows against him. When attacked, he uses his shield block ability to boost his AC. He uses the benefit of Mounted Combat and the effect of shield ally to protect his mount.

Even if deprived of his mount and allies, the Black Duke is a deadly foe. With his *howling helm* (see the sidebar), he employs *greater shout* to stun multiple foes and deafen spellcasters. He then flings himself at the nearest enemy, targeting good clerics or paladins over all others, grappling the chosen target so that he can drain that creature's blood. If his opponent's allies attempt to enter the fray, the Black Duke counts on his temporary hit points and fast healing to keep him alive as he maintains the grapple. Once the first adversary is dead, the Black Duke turns to the next opponent, baring his bloody fangs for another embrace.

Sample Encounter

Though the Black Duke is capable of great subtlety and stealth, he exults in the chance to pit his skills against expert warriors. Under such circumstances, he might reveal his true nature early, manifesting in the dead of night to issue bold challenges to those he respects. Foes who fall to the Black Duke's blade have their skill at arms assessed. Those found wanting meet their end by that blade. The few who impress the Black Duke have their blood drained so that they might share in his dark gifts.

Illus. by T. Giorello

HOWLING HELM

Price (Item Level): 20,000 gp (15th)
Body Slot: Head
Caster Level: 15th
Aura: Strong; (DC 22) evocation
Activation: Standard (command)
Weight: 3 lb.

This shining mithral helm is shaped like a wolf's head.

Whenever desired, the wearer can whisper a command word to amplify his voice up to the level of twenty humans shouting, which can be heard from six miles away in an otherwise quiet area. A second whispered command, which is not amplified, ends the effect. The wearer can utter a different command word to use *greater shout,* as the spell, once per day.

Prerequisites: Craft Wondrous Item, *ghost sound, greater shout.*

Cost to Create: 10,000 gp, 800 XP, 20 days.

Challenge of the Black Duke (EL 19+): Through all seasons, the Black Duke leads a host of undead through the forlorn stretches of his demesne. Thundering forward on his cauchemar nightmare steed (*MM* 194), he is accompanied by at least six elite vampires (*MM* 251) and up to double this number of vampire spawn (*MM* 253). Sweeping through his lands, he searches for would-be heroes to add to his court.

The Black Duke and his entourage are an epic encounter in every sense of the word. On his own, the vampire lord is still formidable, but PCs have only one chance to engage the Black Duke alone. When he finds a party whose warriors have the mettle he seeks, the Black Duke approaches at nightfall, alone, cloaked, and on foot so as not to give his identity away. He issues his challenge only once, and expects an immediate response. For PCs intent on destroying the Black Duke, the acceptance of this single-combat challenge (whether as part of a previously prepared trap or not) might be their only option.

Ecology

More than two hundred years ago, the Black Duke was famous for his courage and daring on the battlefield. Beloved by noble and commoner alike, this great knight was a chivalrous champion, valiant and pure. However, this bold exterior concealed his fear of death, the seed of a dark corruption.

As a warrior, the knight had seen countless deaths and had sent more than his share of foes to the darkness. Even as each new enemy fell to his swift sword, he knew that he must one day meet his match. Although he trained ceaselessly, the knight dreaded his own mortality, fearing the eventual day when he would be the one breathing his last on the bloody battlefield.

As the Black Duke entered his twilight years, a great and wild host of orcs poured into the knight's lands. Bent on rapine and destruction, these merciless killers butchered with abandon. No longer the warrior he was, the once-great knight quailed at the thought of donning his armor and facing the enemy. And so he waited in his castle while his subjects died. The exhortations of his fellow knights fell on deaf ears, for he knew that if he went out against that host, he would surely fall.

As his lands were conquered around him, the knight descended into madness and fled to his inner chambers. He begged the gods to spare him from death, vowing that he would do whatever was asked of him in exchange for the gift of immortality. His pleas gained the attention of Orcus, who longed for mortal souls to feed his insatiable hunger. The demon prince granted this knight the power to defeat death by stealing his soul, transforming his mortal form into the undead monstrosity it remains to this day.

Environment: Filled with the power of undeath, the Black Duke now fears no mortal foe. With his host, he often rides the ruined remnants of his ravaged lands, looking for intruders and worthy foes. He keeps a macabre court within the crumbling halls of his stronghold.

Physical Characteristics: The Black Duke is a powerfully built human male with a shock of white hair. No compassion shows in his soulless black eyes—only madness and hatred. His features are smooth, but his skin is pale and translucent, revealing a tangle of bright red arteries and black veins beneath. The Black Duke is rarely without his mithral breastplate, which is engraved with images of wolves and bats. He wears his *howling helm* whenever he leaves his keep.

Alignment: The Black Duke is thoroughly insane and immoral. Corrupt to the core and a servant of the demon prince Orcus, he is capricious, prone to violent outbursts and slaughterous behavior. Though he can also be pleasant, disarming, and (to some) seductive, the Black Duke typifies chaotic evil.

Society

Soon after the Black Duke's transformation, he slew the few knights who remained faithful to him, draining them of their life energy and watching them rise as his eternal servants. At the same time, the influence of Orcus cursed his dying lands, corrupting its dead and driving the superstitious orcs away. The Black Duke's court is now a mockery of its past glory, filled with shuffling zombies, ravenous ghouls, and the ghosts of those he betrayed with his cowardice.

Emboldened by the gift bestowed by Orcus, the Black Duke rides through the night in the company of his warriors. He surveys his lands as he did when he was alive. However, instead of the revels and celebrations of the past, the shattered bones of the dead and the ruins of his fiefs are stark reminders of his unholy corruption.

Typical Treasure

The Black Duke's wealth lies in the weapons and armor that are the tools of his trade. His deep and abiding fear of final death drives the vampire lord to spend the bulk of his wealth on protective items. His total wealth is comparable to a player character of his Challenge Rating.

THE RED WIDOW

From out of nowhere, a strikingly beautiful female appears. She wears tight-fitting crimson clothing and a long red cloak, auburn hair framing her perfect features. One hand grips a demonic longsword while the other reaches for you, limned with ghostly light.

THE RED WIDOW CR 17

Female vampire ninja 5*/fighter 2/ghost-faced killer 8*
* Classes described in *Complete Adventurer*
NE Medium undead (augmented humanoid)
Init +12; **Senses** darkvision 60 ft., ghost sight; Listen +19, Spot +27
Languages Common, Elven, Infernal

AC 38, touch 26, flat-footed 30; Dodge, Mobility
(+8 Dex, +5 class, +6 armor, +3 deflection, +6 natural)
hp 97 (15 HD); fast healing 5; **DR** 10/magic and silver
Immune undead immunities
Resist cold 10, electricity 10, +4 turn resistance
Fort +14, **Ref** +20, **Will** +7 (+9 with *ki* power)
Weakness vampire weaknesses (*MM* 253)

Speed 30 ft. (6 squares); Spring Attack, great leap, spider climb
Melee *sword of life stealing* +20/+15/+10 (1d8+7/17–20 plus energy drain) or
Melee slam +18 (1d6+7/19–20 plus energy drain)
Ranged *+3 composite longbow* +24/+19/+14 (1d8+8/×3)
Base Atk +13; **Grp** +18
Atk Options Cleave, Combat Reflexes, Improved Feint, Power Attack, blood drain, frightful attack 2/day, magic strike, sudden strike +6d6
Special Actions alternate form, children of the night, create spawn, dominating gaze, gaseous form, ghost step (invisible), ghost step (invisible or ethereal) 3/day, *ki* power 5/day
Combat Gear *boots of speed, elixir of hiding, 2 potions of inflict moderate wounds*

Abilities Str 20, Dex 26, Con —, Int 14, Wis 16, Cha 15
SA blood drain, children of the night, create spawn, dominating gaze, energy drain, frightful attack, magic strike, sudden strike
SQ trapfinding
Feats Alertness[B], Cleave, Combat Expertise, Combat Reflexes[B], Dodge[B], Improved Critical (longsword), Improved Critical (slam), Improved Feint, Improved Initiative[B], Lightning Reflexes[B], Mobility, Power Attack, Spring Attack, Stealthy
Skills Balance +14, Bluff +22, Climb +15, Concentration +6, Diplomacy +4, Disguise +2 (+4 acting), Hide +34, Intimidate +18, Jump +25, Listen +19, Move Silently +35, Search +10, Sense Motive +11, Spot +27, Tumble +26
Possessions combat gear plus *bracers of armor +6, sword of life stealing, +3 composite longbow* (+5 Str bonus) with 20 arrows, *cloak of resistance +4, gloves of Dexterity +6, ring of freedom of movement, ring of protection +3*

Ghost Sight (Su) The Red Widow can see ethereal and invisible creatures and objects within her normal range of vision.

Great Leap (Su) Makes Jump checks as if running with the Run feat. *Complete Adventurer* 8.

Spider Climb (Ex) Climb sheer surfaces as though with a *spider climb* spell.

Energy Drain (Su) Living creatures hit by the Red Widow's slam attack gain two negative levels. For each negative level bestowed, the Red Widow gains 5 temporary hit points that last for up to 1 hour. DC 19 Fortitude save to remove a negative level. The save DC is Charisma-based.

Blood Drain (Ex) The Red Widow can suck blood from a living victim with her fangs by making a successful grapple check. If she pins the foe, she drains blood, dealing 1d4 points of Constitution drain each round the pin is maintained. On each successful blood drain, the Red Widow gains 5 temporary hit points that last for up to 1 hour

Frightful Attack (Su) The Red Widow can designate a melee sudden strike attack as a frightful attack. She must use her Power Attack feat and take a penalty of at least –1 on the attack roll. If the attack deals damage, the victim must succeed on a DC 20 Will save or die. On a successful save, the victim is shaken for 8 rounds.

Those within 30 feet (except the Red Widow, her victim, and her allies) who see the frightful attack become panicked (if they have 10 or fewer Hit Dice) or shaken for 8 rounds. A successful Will save (DC 20 + the damage bonus from the Red Widow's Power Attack) negates this effect.

This is a mind-affecting fear ability that cannot affect creatures that have 16 or more Hit Dice.

Sudden Strike (Ex) As sneak attack (*PH* 50), but no extra damage when flanking. *Complete Adventurer* 8.

Alternate Form (Su) The Red Widow can assume the form of a bat, dire bat, wolf, or dire wolf as a standard action. When in her alternate form, the Red Widow loses her natural slam attack and dominating gaze ability, but she gains the natural weapons and extraordinary special attacks of her new form. The Red Widow can remain in bat, dire bat, wolf, or dire wolf form until she chooses to assume a new form or until the next sunrise.

Children of the Night (Su) Once per day, the Red Widow can call 1d6+1 rat swarms, 1d4+1 bat swarms, or a pack of 3d6 wolves. These creatures arrive in 2d6 rounds and serve the Red Widow for 1 hour.

Create Spawn (Su) A humanoid or monstrous humanoid slain by the Red Widow's energy drain rises as a vampire spawn 1d4 days after burial. If the Red Widow instead drains the victim's Constitution to 0 or lower, the victim returns as a spawn if it had 4 or fewer HD and as a vampire if it had 5 or more HD. In either case, the new vampire or spawn is under the Red Widow's command and remains enslaved until her destruction.

At any given time, the Red Widow can have no more than 30 enslaved spawn, though vampires she creates can have enslaved spawn of their own.

Dominating Gaze (Su) As the *dominate person* spell, range 30 feet, Will DC 19 negates, caster level 12th. The save DC is Charisma-based.

Gaseous Form (Su) As the *gaseous form* spell; at will; caster level 5th. The Red Widow can remain in this form indefinitely, and she has a fly speed of 20 feet with perfect maneuverability while in gaseous form.

Ghost Step (invisible) (Su) Swift action; one daily *ki* power use; become invisible for 1 round. *Complete Adventurer* 8.

Ghost Step (invisible or ethereal) (Su) Swift action; become invisible or ethereal for 1 round. *Complete Adventurer* 52.

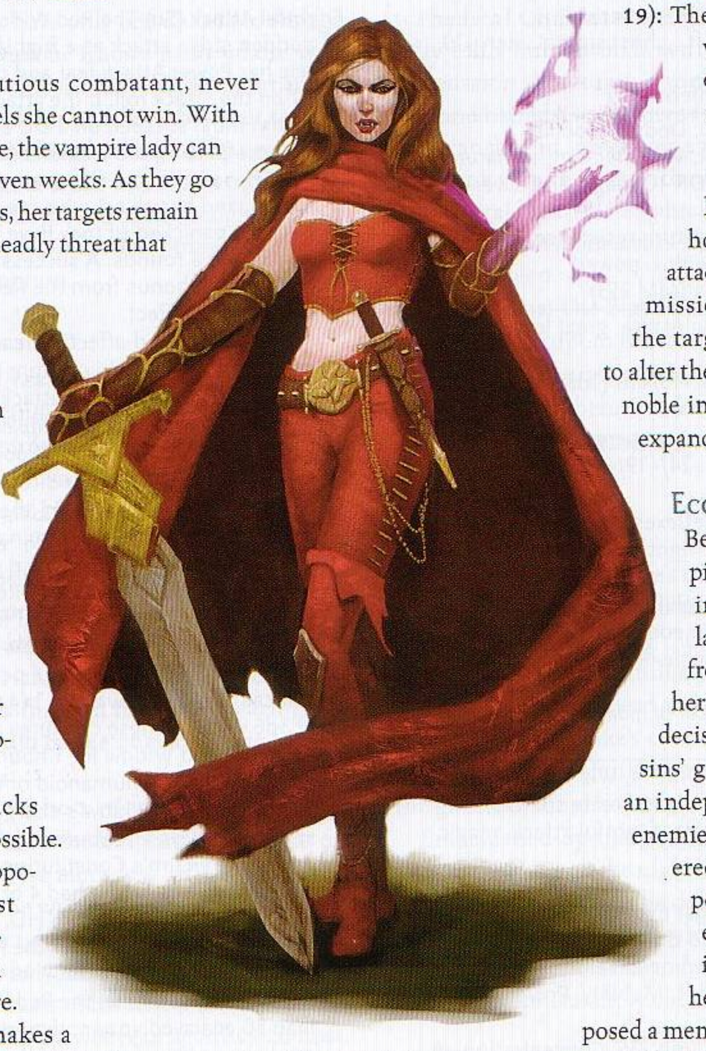
Ki Power (Su) Expend one daily use to activate ki-based abilities (ghost step); +2 bonus on Will saves as long as at least one daily use remains. *Complete Adventurer* 8.

The mighty vampire known as the Red Widow controls a network of undead assassins in the cities of a half-dozen lands. Known for their consummate professionalism and efficiency at killing, the members of the Red Widow's brigade are among the most highly sought-after killers in the realm and beyond.

The vampire presented here was human before gaining the vampire template, and she had the following ability scores before Hit Dice and racial ability score adjustments: Str 14, Dex 15, Con 8, Int 12, Wis 13, Cha 10.

Strategies and Tactics

The Red Widow is a cautious combatant, never entering into a fight she feels she cannot win. With incredible patience and care, the vampire lady can watch her prey for days or even weeks. As they go about their normal business, her targets remain blissfully unaware of the deadly threat that lurks just out of sight.



The Red Widow

Illus. by R. Spears

While on the hunt at night, the Red Widow prefers to assume gaseous form to blend in with the wisps of fog that rise from the streets. On clear nights, she might transform into a wolf or a bat, depending on the appropriateness of the form. Otherwise, she simply hides in the shadows, silently following her prey as she waits for the optimal moment to strike.

The Red Widow attacks with surprise whenever possible. Against overly cautious opponents, she uses her ghost step ability to become invisible or ethereal, then strikes as if from nowhere. To initiate combat, she makes a frightful attack, weakening a foe she fails to kill. On subsequent rounds, she makes extensive use of ghost step to ensure that she deals sudden strike damage. Once her victim is unconscious or dying, she feeds.

If the Red Widow is fought on her own turf, she becomes even more dangerous. The vampire surrounds herself with an army of minions—vampires, wights, wraiths, and other undead. Given time to prepare, she calls forth rats or wolves to slow intruders, ordering her minions to attack any foes who break past that first line of defense. Only if confronted with superior opponents does the Red Widow retreat. Otherwise, she uses her dominating gaze to control her attackers, then lays into them with frightful strike to make them rue the day they set foot in her lair.

Sample Encounter

Unless the fight is brought to her, the Red Widow chooses the time and place of her battles. She is driven to remain in control of any situation, and if combat turns against her, she has no qualms about saving herself at the expense of her followers.

Red Widow Strike Team (EL 19): The Red Widow and two elite vampires (*MM* 251) have taken a commission to murder a highly placed noble in the city. After infiltrating the compound and dominating key members of the noble's household, they prepare their attack. Though the terms of their mission are simply to eliminate the target, the Red Widow intends to alter the bargain—transforming the noble into a vampire so that she can expand her influence in the city.

Ecology

Before her rebirth as a vampire, the Red Widow was an infamous killer in the realm's largest city, taking her name from the crimson cloak that was her trademark. The Red Widow's decision to refuse to join the assassins' guild in favor of operating as an independent made her numerous enemies. To protect herself, she gathered intelligence regarding key personnel in the guild, threatening to reveal their identities if they made a move against her. To prove her point, she exposed a member of a leading noble family as one of the guild's inner circle. The scandal that erupted rocked the city.

Enraged by this young upstart's hubris, the assassins plotted to have her removed as a means of protecting themselves and their clients. Because they knew the Red Widow would be watching for any sign of retaliation, they enlisted the aid of a small but powerful cult of Pyremius (*Complete Divine* 123). In exchange for the living victims required for their dark rites, the cultists vowed to deal with this troublesome rogue.

To carry out the job, the priests of the murderous deity looked to their leader—a mighty vampire who had taken over the cult years before. After easily tracking the elusive Red

Widow, the vampire cornered her in her apartments, bending her to his will with his dominating gaze ability. Intrigued by her particular talents and inspired by his wicked faith, the vampire decided not to slay the Red Widow outright, instead allowing her to join him in his unhallowed state.

When the Red Widow awoke, her rage was beyond measure. At the same time, she was fascinated by the dark gifts the priest had granted her. She learned the ways of her new form quickly, impressing her new master and earning his trust and confidence. When he finally confirmed her suspicions regarding who was behind the attack on her, the Red Widow slipped out into the night and drank deeply of the blood of the assassins who had sought to destroy her. In the aftermath, she left the city where she had made her name, never to return. All the long years since, she has sought and made her fortune far from the conspiracies and treacheries of that place.

Environment: Since her transformation, the Red Widow has established a network of hired killers in cities across the continent. She splits her time between several lairs, traveling to and from them by means of a sleek ebony carriage drawn by nine black horses. One of her various coffins is contained within a secret compartment in the cab's cargo space.

Though she prefers urban environments, the Red Widow has been known to venture to remote locations to carry out special assignments.

Physical Characteristics: The Red Widow appears as a beautiful young female with long auburn hair and pale skin. Upon closer examination, her striking features reveal a hardened edge and the promise of violence. She wears clothes of deep red that are tailored for combat, with a billowing cloak of the same color. Her bestial appearance asserts itself only when she is angry, her face twisting into a snarling visage as she reveals her fangs.

Alignment: The Red Widow values self-preservation above all else. Every action she takes is designed with her own luxury and safety in mind. Though she was rarely virtuous to begin with, her transformation drained her of all compassion and other softer emotions, leaving her staunchly neutral evil.

Society

Nominally freed from her creator's influence, the Red Widow abandoned her past life to begin anew. Faced with the constant and gnawing need for life energy, she saw a perfect union between her talents as a killer and the new abilities gained from her transformation. However, she knew that the assassins' guild that had once hunted her might have a long reach. Though its leaders had died at her hands, their successors were bound to seek her again. Rather than leaving her future to chance, the Red Widow infiltrated a smaller cell of assassins in her new home city, transforming the best of them into vampire thralls and consuming those who failed her.

For the last fifty years, the Red Widow and her minions have infiltrated an increasing number of criminal organizations, expanding their roles as hired killers to encompass less romantic but often more profitable enterprises. From smuggling to extortion, petty theft to protection rackets, a significant amount of the criminal underworld's operations in the major cities of the land is controlled by the Red Widow's operatives.

The Red Widow prefers to surround herself with other undead creatures she can trust, but she realizes that her vampiric minions run the risk of exposing themselves through their need to feed. Accordingly, she conceals her true nature and uses living minions to manage her interests and see to the day-to-day operation of her organization.

Typical Treasure

Though the Red Widow appreciates the finer things in life, she is also practical. Nearly all her wealth is in the form of personal possessions (chiefly weapons and magic items) that enhance her other talents. The success of her organization allows her to ensure that her underlings are properly equipped for the missions they undertake. Her total wealth is comparable to a player character of her Challenge Rating.

VAMPIRE LORE

Characters who have ranks in Knowledge (religion) or Knowledge (local) can learn more about vampires, the Red Widow, and the Black Duke. When a character makes a successful skill check, the following lore is revealed, including the information from lower DCs.

Knowledge (Religion)

DC	Result
15	This creature is a vampire, a foul undead that drinks the blood of the living.
20	Vampires possess a number of deadly abilities, including a dominating gaze and a touch that can drain the life from a creature.
25	Vampires are the masters of the night, and can summon nocturnal animals that obey their profane will. By drinking the blood of the living, vampires rejuvenate themselves and create their foul spawn.
30	Vampires are particularly resilient, capable of shrugging off the harshest wounds and healing rapidly when they are injured. Magic silvered weapons are the surest way to overcome a vampire's unnatural defenses.

Knowledge (Local)

DC	Result
27	This is the Red Widow, a ruthless vampire who commands a large network of vampire assassins.
29	This is the Black Duke, a fallen knight turned vampire lord. He prowls the ruins of his former lands in search of new champions to convert to his unholy cause.

VERDANT REAVER

A creature resembling animated driftwood shambles into view, roots and undergrowth springing up from the ground where it walks. You hear the creak of twisting wood as it strides forward, thick limbs thrashing the ground as they reach for you.

VERDANT REAVER **CR 5**
Usually N Large plant
Init +0; **Senses** low-light vision; Listen +5, Spot +4
Languages Sylvan

AC 16, touch 9, flat-footed 16
(–1 size, +7 natural)
hp 63 (6 HD)
Immune plant immunities
Fort +11, **Ref** +2, **Will** +2
Weakness vulnerability to fire

Speed 30 ft. (6 squares); woodland stride
Melee 2 slams +8 each (1d8+5)
Space 10 ft.; **Reach** 10 ft.
Base Atk +4; **Grp** +13
Atk Options Cleave, Power Attack, Powerful Charge, verdant growth, verdant rend 1d8+7

Abilities Str 20, Dex 10, Con 22, Int 6, Wis 10, Cha 6
SA verdant growth, verdant rend
SQ plant traits
Feats Cleave, Power Attack, Powerful Charge
Skills Listen +5, Spot +4
Advancement 7–12 HD (Large); 13–18 HD (Huge)

Woodland Stride (Ex) A verdant reaver can move through any sort of undergrowth (such as natural thorns, briars, overgrown areas, and similar terrain) at its normal speed and without taking damage or suffering any other impairment. However, thorns, briars, and overgrown areas that have been magically manipulated to impede motion still affect it.

Verdant Growth (Su) Squares adjacent to a verdant reaver spring up with low brush and tangled roots, even if they are actually bare stone. It costs 2 squares of movement to enter a square of verdant growth, and the DC of Tumble checks increases by 2 in such squares. This growth also imposes a –2 penalty on Move Silently checks. Squares of verdant growth revert to their normal state as soon as a verdant reaver is no longer adjacent.

Verdant Rend (Ex) If both of a verdant reaver's slams hit a single target that is touching the ground and adjacent to the reaver, verdant growth tears at that target, dealing an extra 1d8+7 points of damage.

Those who live their lives in the service of a dryad become changed over time, becoming one with the natural world of their mistress. In the end, they are transformed into verdant reavers, losing all memory of their former lives as they become thralls of the fey.

STRATEGIES AND TACTICS

A verdant reaver typically begins combat with a Powerful Charge to measure a foe's relative strength. Against weaker melee threats or creatures that have reach, a verdant reaver tries to remain adjacent to make use of its verdant rend ability. Foes that make multiple attacks in melee are instead kept 5 feet away, forcing them to move into the area of the reaver's verdant growth if they wish to attack. Since this movement cannot be accomplished with merely a 5-foot step, such foes cannot make a full attack. Additionally, they might provoke an attack of opportunity when they move through the verdant reaver's threatened area.

SAMPLE ENCOUNTER

Verdant reavers are typically encountered with their dryad mistresses or some other controller. However, since they are not bound to a particular tree as dryads are, they can range a considerable distance as they carry out their mistress's commands.

Mistaken Identity (EL 9): A pair of dryads (*MM* 90) has mistaken the PCs for the woodcutters who slew their sister. The dryads' three verdant reaver servants launch an attack while the dryads hang back using *tree shape*. After 1 round of combat, the dryads take their normal forms and use *tree stride* to move behind the PCs. From that position, they use *suggestion* against spellcasters and try to catch other characters with *deep slumber* or *entangle*, taking care to avoid the verdant reavers in the process. The PCs might be able to talk to the dryads and end the fight, but the verdant reavers stop attacking only if a dryad orders them to.

ECOLOGY

When a dryad *charms* a humanoid creature to her service, that creature slowly begins to absorb the essence of his fey mistress and the forest she defends. The life of a dryad's thrall is a harsh one. Such creatures experience all the wildness of the weather and the changing of the seasons,

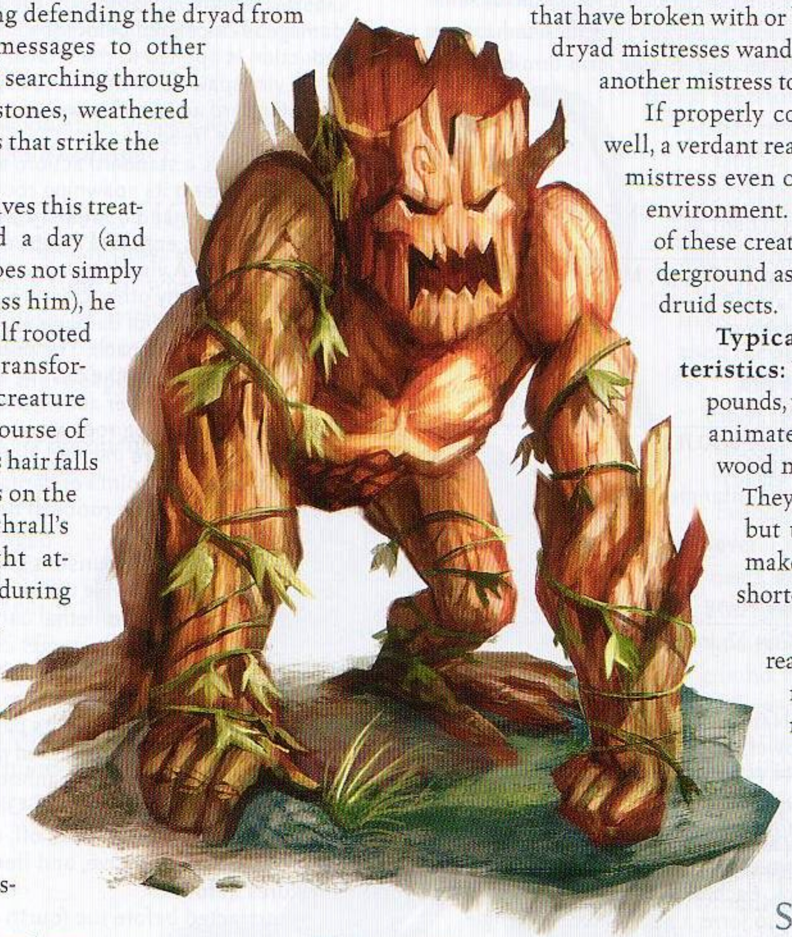
VERDANT REAVER LORE

Characters who have ranks in Knowledge (nature) can learn more about verdant reavers. When a character makes a successful skill check, the following lore is revealed, including the information from lower DCs.

Knowledge (Nature)

DC	Result
15	This creature is a verdant reaver, a plant creature transformed from a subject enthralled to the service of the fey.
20	Verdant reavers are born of creatures *charmed* by a dryad. They defend their dryad mistresses fiercely, but they are sometimes found wandering in search of a new mistress to serve.
25	A verdant reaver causes a riot of plant growth in the nearby area. This growth impedes the movement of creatures attacking it and can deal extra damage to those struck by the verdant reaver.

and they are forced to scramble for shelter, warmth, and food. Thralls must also survive the tasks their dryads set for them, including defending the dryad from threats, delivering messages to other dryads in the area, and searching through the forest for shiny stones, weathered wood, and other items that strike the dryad's fancy.


Verdant reaver

If a humanoid survives this treatment for a year and a day (and assuming the dryad does not simply grow bored and dismiss him), he awakens to find himself rooted to the ground. His transformation into a plant creature takes place over the course of that day. The creature's hair falls out, and his skin takes on the texture of bark. The thrall's dryad mistress might attempt to comfort him during this distressing and painful process. Attempting to cut or tear the creature from the ground kills it instantly, but a *remove disease* or *remove curse* spell frees the thrall from the transformation process.

If not freed before sundown, the thrall becomes a verdant reaver, forgetting nearly all its past life and possessing undying loyalty to the dryad who created it.

Evil and neutral dryads delight in creating verdant reaver servants, seeking out those hapless souls who pass too close to their domains. Good dryads rarely make verdant reavers intentionally, sometimes discovering the process only after a romantic attraction to a humanoid turns to dark possessiveness. Thereafter, a good dryad creates a verdant reaver only if she believes a thrall is worthy of the punishment.

Freeing a thrall from a dryad can be a simple matter of dispelling the *charm* effect that binds it, but such creatures can also be easily freed while they sleep. A dryad's *charm person* spell-like ability normally lasts 6 hours and can be used three times per day. This leaves a 6-hour period during which the thrall is free of the dryad's *charm*. Dryads typically use *suggestion* to order the thrall to sleep and take shelter until morning, whereupon the dryad can renew her *charm*. If approached and awakened during this period, a thrall might be easily convinced to escape its servitude.

Environment: Verdant reavers live primarily in the temperate forests where dryads are found. However, those that have broken with or been dismissed by their dryad mistresses wander far afield in search of another mistress to obey and protect.

If properly commanded and treated well, a verdant reaver might follow a new mistress even out of its normal forest environment. Rumors sometimes tell of these creatures living entirely underground as the servants of strange druid sects.

Typical Physical Characteristics: Weighing 600 to 1,000 pounds, verdant reavers resemble animated fallen logs or driftwood more than living plants. They stand 12 to 15 feet tall, but their hunched posture makes them appear slightly shorter.

Alignment: Verdant reavers are creatures of raw nature, so they have no moral connection to their former lives or even the dryads who created them. They are almost always neutral.

SOCIETY

Once its transformation is complete, a verdant reaver loses almost all connection to the being it once was. As creatures devoted to the individual dryads who created them, verdant reavers have no society of their own. However, they all share common traits. Verdant reavers must serve a mistress—a female creature (or one that appears to be female) willing to give the verdant reaver orders. In the absence of its creator dryad, a verdant reaver seeks out another mistress.

Verdant reavers in search of a new mistress seek out nymphs, sprites, and forest-dwelling humanoids who commonly speak Sylvan, such as druids and elves. If it goes without a mistress for a year and a day, a verdant reaver dies. In the service of the fey or other creatures that protect nature, these creatures can live indefinitely.

TYPICAL TREASURE

Verdant reavers have little use for treasure, but they are compelled to collect valuables. They give this wealth to their mistresses as tribute. A verdant reaver without a mistress carries its treasure in the hollows of its barklike skin. Verdant reavers have half standard treasure for their Challenge Rating, mostly in gems and magic items.

Illus. by M. Coimbra

VINESPAWN

As you approach it, the vine-covered tree before you suddenly shudders. A towering mass of tendrils peels away from the trunk to form a distinct creature, the tight mesh of its vine form thrashing as it lurches toward you.

VINESPAWN **CR 7**
Usually N Large plant
Init +5; **Senses** low-light vision; Listen +3, Spot +4
Languages —

AC 18, touch 14, flat-footed 13; Dodge, Mobility (–1 size, +5 Dex, +4 natural)
hp 102 (12 HD); **DR** 5/slashing
Immune plant immunities
Weakness vulnerability to fire
Fort +11, **Ref** +11, **Will** +4

Speed 30 ft. (6 squares), climb 30 ft.
Melee 2 slams +14 each (1d8+6)
Ranged vine net +13 touch (entangle)
Space 10 ft.; **Reach** 10 ft.
Base Atk +9; **Grp** +19
Atk Options Power Attack
Special Actions engulf, spawning

Abilities Str 22, Dex 21, Con 17, Int 5, Wis 10, Cha 12
SA engulf, spawning
SQ plant traits
Feats Dodge, Improved Natural Attack (slam), Lightning Reflexes, Mobility, Power Attack
Skills Climb +14, Hide +14 (+22 in forest), Listen +3, Move Silently +8, Spot +4
Advancement 13–24 HD (Large); 25–36 HD (Huge)

Vine Net (Ex) A vinespawn can hurl parts of its body up to 30 feet as a ranged attack. Each of these tightly wound balls of vine opens in flight to form a net that can entangle a creature up to one size category larger than the vinespawn. A vinespawn can create one vine net per day for every 4 Hit Dice that it has (normally three per day).

Engulf (Ex) As a standard action, a vinespawn can flow over Medium or smaller creatures, entrapping them within its form. The vinespawn simply moves into the opponents' space; any creature whose space it completely covers is subject to the engulf attack. A vinespawn cannot make slam or vine net attacks during a round in which it engulfs. It can engulf as many creatures as can fit in its space.

Opponents can make attacks of opportunity against a vinespawn, but if they do they are not entitled to a saving throw. Those who do not attempt attacks of opportunity must succeed on a DC 18 Reflex save or be engulfed; on a success, a creature moves aside or back (opponent's choice) to move out of the vinespawn's path. The save DC is Strength-based.

As a swift action, a vinespawn can crush engulfed creatures, dealing 2d6+12 points of nonlethal damage. Engulfed creatures are considered grappled and trapped within the vinespawn's body, but they can attempt to damage the vinespawn or escape from it as with a normal grapple. A vinespawn is not considered to be grappling when it has engulfed a creature, and it cannot be pinned by an engulfed creature.

A creature engulfed by a vinespawn is subject to any area effect to which the vinespawn is subjected. Grappled and engulfed creatures lose any Dexterity bonus to AC but gain a +4 bonus on Reflex saves for having cover. An engulfed creature takes half damage from any attack that deals piercing damage to the vinespawn. This half damage is calculated before the vinespawn's damage reduction is applied to the attack.

A vinespawn can choose to expel engulfed creatures as a standard action. If a vinespawn is killed, any engulfed creatures are freed.

Spawning (Ex) As a standard action, a vinespawn can attempt to insert its spawning root down the throat of an engulfed humanoid, monstrous humanoid, or giant. An unconscious engulfed creature cannot resist the spawning root. A vinespawn must succeed on a grapple check to infect any other creature. The engulfed creature takes 1d6+8 points of damage as the thorny appendage burrows into its stomach. The presence of a spawning root prevents talking, the casting of any spells with verbal components, and other activities requiring speech. Removing a spawning root requires a successful grapple check by the creature invaded by the root, but doing so deals an extra 1d6 points of damage. If the vinespawn is killed, the spawning root can be removed without dealing damage.

A spawning root nourishes an unconscious creature, keeping it breathing while the vinespawn uses periodic swift actions to deal nonlethal damage and keep the target unconscious. If the target creature is left in this state for 1 day, vines grow through its veins. On the fourth day in this state, the victim dies as an adult vinespawn exits the body of its parent.

A vinespawn that is attacked during the spawning process can fight back but cannot move without disengaging its spawning root. Only if reduced to 20 or fewer hit points does it break off, disengaging the vine, dealing damage as above, and fleeing with engulfed creatures in tow.

If extracted before the fourth day, the victim is sickened even when returned to consciousness. Such victims die in 2d4 days unless *remove disease* is used to destroy the vines that can be seen growing beneath their skin.

VINESPAWN LORE

Characters who have ranks in Knowledge (nature) can learn more about vinespawns. When a character makes a successful skill check, the following lore is revealed, including the information from lower DCs.

Knowledge (Nature)

DC	Result
17	This mobile mass of vines is a vinespawn, a skilled and cunning hunter.
22	A vinespawn has a vicious slam attack and can hurl parts of its own body at opponents as vine nets. It can engulf opponents by simply rolling over them, trapping and crushing creatures within the mesh of its body.
27	Vinespawns do not feed on living creatures, but those they hunt meet a more grisly fate. Vinespawns reproduce by spawning within a living host, which becomes a new vinespawn after four days.

Skills Vinespawns have a +8 racial bonus on Climb checks and Hide checks. They can choose to take 10 on Climb checks even if rushed or threatened. In forested areas, a vinespawn's racial bonus on Hide checks increases to +16.

Creatures of the deep woodlands, vinespawns are cunning hunters who strike without warning.

STRATEGIES AND TACTICS

Vinespawns prefer to ambush prey, and they usually flee from a fight in which they are at a disadvantage from the start. Vinespawns initiate combat by hurling vine nets at those bearing slashing weapons, then charge into melee.

A vinespawn batters its opponents with slams, engulfing any creatures it can. It uses further vine nets to hinder ranged attackers and flanking foes. When it has rendered an engulfed victim unconscious, a vinespawn retreats into the surrounding trees.

Once it is in a place of safety, a vinespawn engages in spawning. Unless attacked, the vinespawn stays hidden until the process is complete.

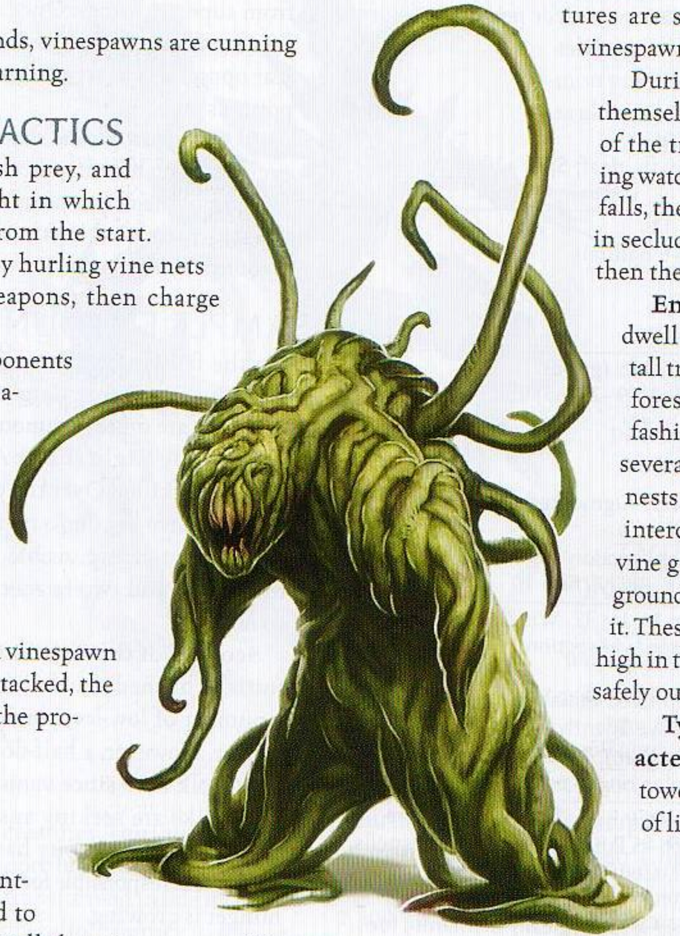
SAMPLE ENCOUNTERS

Vinespawns are cunning hunters driven solely by their need to spawn. Vinespawns typically dwell alone in the deep forest, though groups of these creatures are known to lurk along trade routes. Such groups typically number six or fewer vinespawns, led by the largest and most aggressive specimen. The members of larger packs inevitably turn on each other in their competition for suitable spawning hosts and space.

Creeping Death (**EL 7**): A single vinespawn lurks in the trees near a well-traveled path, waiting for unsuspecting creatures to pass beneath it. Once it has engulfed its prey, it returns to its nearby lair.

Bivouac Bushwack (**EL 11**): Four vinespawns lurk in the woodlands around an established campsite. Though merchant caravans and adventurers regularly stop here, no travelers have been through the area in a number of weeks. Members of the pack are growing bold.

The vinespawns attack when campers settle in for the night. When battle begins, three of the creatures hurl vine nets from different directions before charging. The fourth hangs back to use its vine nets against those who flee or who deal significant damage with ranged attacks.



Vinespawn

Illus. by M. Coimbra

ECOLOGY

As plant creatures, vinespawns do not hunt for food. They are thus indifferent to the birds and animals sharing their woodlands. Only Small or larger creatures are suitable for spawning, so vinespawns ignore all others.

During the day, vinespawns sun themselves on the highest boughs of the trees they call home, keeping watch for suitable prey. As dusk falls, they creep forth to seek water in secluded pools and streams, and then they begin to hunt.

Environment: Vinespawns dwell in vine-choked groves of tall trees in temperate and warm forests. Within the vines, they fashion intricate nests that have several distinct chambers. The nests of a vinespawn pack are interconnected. In areas where vine growth rises well above the ground, vinespawn nests rise with it. These creatures sometimes lair high in the forest canopy, spawning safely out of reach of any threats.

Typical Physical Characteristics: Vinespawns are towering creatures composed of living vines in a tightly woven mesh. Their bodies are supple but strong. A vinespawn stands 12 feet tall and weighs 1,500 pounds.

Alignment: Vinespawns are creatures focused only on the need to spawn. They are neutral.

SOCIETY

When strong winds batter the forest, vinespawns climb to the highest branches of their tree sanctuaries. There, they contort their bodies to catch and funnel the wind, creating a cacophony of strange wailing sounds that can be heard for miles. Though the creatures' reasons for doing so remain a mystery, they do so in unison. Those who hear these sounds describe them as the cries of the damned. Numerous stories of haunted woodlands have no doubt been inspired by the presence of vinespawns.

TYPICAL TREASURE

Vinespawns have no interest in treasure, but the gear of those they have engulfed sometimes remains caught up in the tight vine mesh of their bodies. Such gear might include weapons, jewelry, and magic items. Vinespawns have standard treasure for their Challenge Rating.

VIVISECTOR

A gangly biped appears above you, descending on thin crystalline wings. Its form is composed of dozens of blue chitinous plates, the cracks between them oozing blood and black ichor. Its head bears a pair of multifaceted eyes but no mouth or nose, and the arms reaching for you end in bloodstained claws.

VIVISECTOR **CR 4**

Always LE Medium aberration
Init +8; **Senses** darkvision 60 ft., deaf; Spot +10
Languages —

AC 21, touch 15, flat-footed 17
(+4 Dex, +1 deflection, +6 natural)
hp 45 (7 HD)
Immune sonic
Fort +4, **Ref** +6, **Will** +5

Speed 30 ft. (6 squares), fly 20 ft. (good)
Melee 2 claws +9 each (1d8+2/19–20/×3) and sting +4 (1d6+1 plus poison)
Space 5 ft.; **Reach** 5 ft.
Base Atk +5; **Grp** +7
Atk Options Combat Reflexes, augmented critical, poison (DC 15, 1d6 Str/1d6 Str)
Special Actions invisibility, vivisection
Combat Gear *potion of resist energy (fire) 10*

Abilities Str 15, Dex 18, Con 14, Int 12, Wis 11, Cha 15
SA augmented critical, poison, vivisection
SQ unnatural biology
Feats Combat Reflexes, Improved Initiative, Weapon Finesse
Skills Heal +8, Hide +16, Move Silently +16, Spot +10
Advancement 8–16 HD (Medium); 17–21 HD (Large)
Possessions combat gear plus *ring of protection +1*

Deaf (Ex) Vivisectors are immune to effects that require hearing to function, such as language-dependent spells. They automatically fail Listen checks.

Augmented Critical (Ex) A vivisector's deadly claws are incredibly sharp, allowing it to surgically dismantle foes. It threatens a critical hit on a roll of 19–20, dealing triple damage on a successful critical hit.

Invisibility (Su) Three times per day, as a swift action, a vivisector can become invisible for 1 round. A vivisector remains invisible even when it attacks.

Vivisection (Ex) As a full-round action, rather than performing a coup de grace, a vivisector can hack into the chest of a helpless humanoid, attempting to harvest choice organs for its personal use. Treat this as an automatic critical hit with a single claw attack that also heals the vivisector of the same amount of damage. If the target is killed, its corpse is rendered unsuitable for spells such as *raise dead* that require an intact body. If the victim survives, the vivisector moves on, ignoring it in favor of other creatures.

Unnatural Biology (Ex) Vivisectors are unnatural creatures that do not eat, drink, breathe, or heal naturally. Instead, they draw sustenance from the vital organs of others.

Skills Vivisectors have a +4 racial bonus on Hide, Move Silently, and Spot checks.

Vivisectors are gruesome creatures that dwell in the darkest corners of humanoid cities and towns. They prey on the weak and the helpless, gorging themselves on the living organs that extend their unnatural lives.

STRATEGIES AND TACTICS

Vivisectors are cowardly foes, preferring to attack from hiding whenever possible. They rely on their ability to hide or turn invisible to avoid direct confrontation and escape from superior forces. Once engaged, however, a vivisector fights with a single-minded ferocity. It uses its claws to tear opponents apart as it attempts to cripple them with its poison sting.

Vivisectors attack and slay any creatures, but they must feed exclusively on humanoids. Once a vivisector has a humanoid foe immobilized or unconscious, it cuts into the creature's chest to claim vital organs, incorporating such viscera into its body.

SAMPLE ENCOUNTERS

On the fringes of humanoid settlements, vivisectors are encountered alone. In larger towns and cities, packs of these creatures are more common.

Death By Night (EL 4): A farming village lives in fear of an unseen killer. Over the past two weeks, cattle and local wildlife have begun to turn up dead and mutilated. Now, the vivisector responsible has turned its attention to the townsfolk, and two farmers and a hunter have been slain so far.

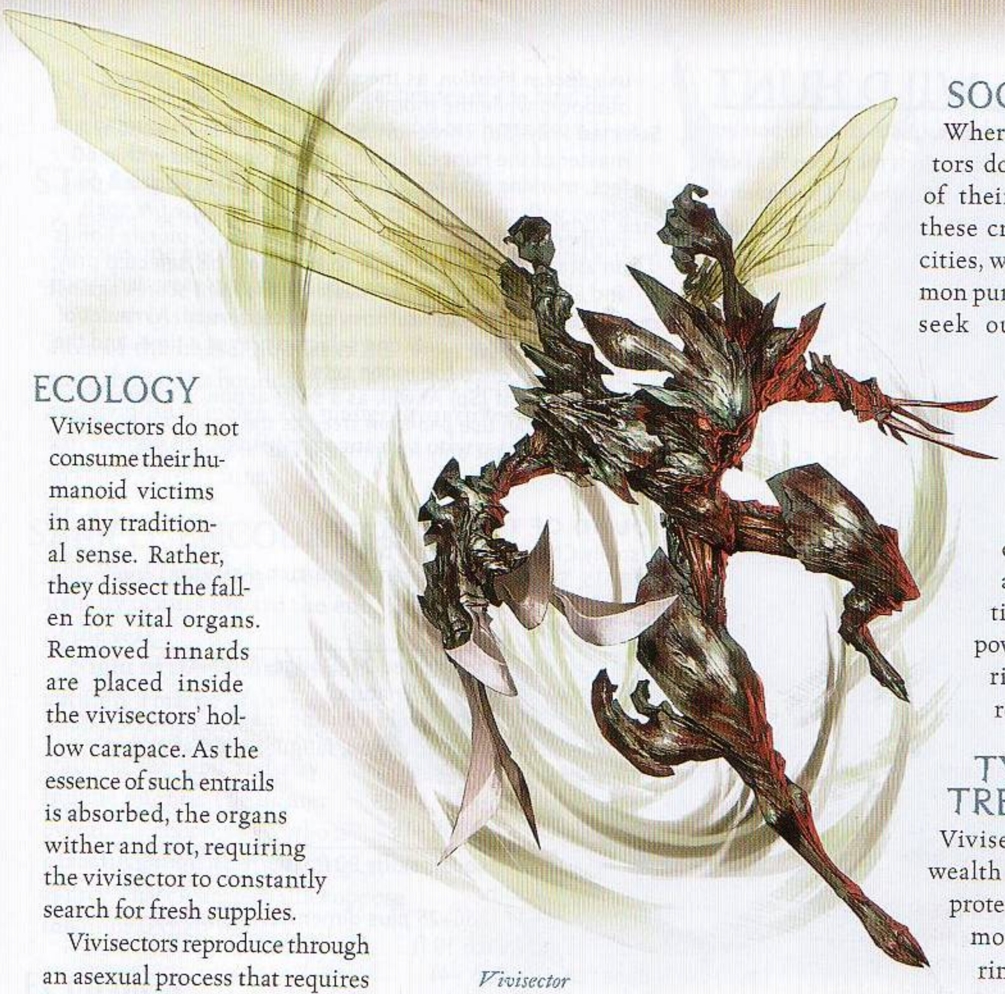
Scourge of the Sewers (EL 8): Residents of a small city initially blamed a turf war within the thieves' guild when a number of low-level bravos and operatives began to disappear. However, a half-dozen merchants and respectable townsfolk have since vanished, and the guild and the city lords alike are seeking answers. A network of abandoned sewers beneath the city has been claimed by a pack of four vivisectors responsible for the disappearances—a pack whose hunger is growing.

VIVISECTOR LORE

Characters who have ranks in Knowledge (dungeoneering) can learn more about vivisectors. When a character makes a successful skill check, the following lore is revealed, including the information from lower DCs.

Knowledge (Dungeoneering)

DC	Result
14	This creature is a vivisector, a gruesome hunter that feasts on its opponents' remains. This result reveals all aberration traits.
19	Vivisectors are immune to sonic damage, and their deafness renders them immune to auditory effects. They are unnatural creatures, and they heal themselves by consuming the organs of their victims.
24	Vivisectors are little more than carapace and claws. They cut out the vital organs of their victims and place them inside their own bodies, drawing sustenance from them in some unearthly way.



Vivisector

ECOLOGY

Vivisectors do not consume their humanoid victims in any traditional sense. Rather, they dissect the fallen for vital organs. Removed innards are placed inside the vivisectors' hollow carapace. As the essence of such entrails is absorbed, the organs wither and rot, requiring the vivisector to constantly search for fresh supplies.

Vivisectors reproduce through an asexual process that requires harvesting the organs of no fewer than ten Medium humanoid creatures. During this time, a vivisector becomes more and more bloated as the organs it claims are slowly processed and transformed inside its body. After two weeks, the vivisector opens its carapace to release a smaller version of itself. Within a week, the new creature has matured to full size, and it leaves its parent to find its own domain to terrorize.

When slain, a vivisector falls to pieces, spilling its stolen organs and shattered carapace to the ground in a reeking heap. Vivisectors are not known to die of old age. As long as a constant supply of victims can be found, these creatures might live forever.

Environment: Vivisectors are found in secluded locations close to potential victims, such as the sewers beneath a city or a defensible cavern near a small town. Though bright light causes them no negative effect, they have an aversion to it, preferring darkness and gloom as a backdrop for their grisly work.

Typical Physical Characteristics: An average vivisector stands about 5 feet tall and weighs 100 pounds. Its body resembles that of a giant praying mantis, with talons at the end of each arm and a pair of dark but translucent wings.

Alignment: Vivisectors are wholly devoted to their dark hunger, as methodical as they are sinister. They are always lawful evil.

SOCIETY

Where victims are scarce, vivisectors do not congregate with others of their kind. However, groups of these creatures thrive beneath large cities, working together for foul common purpose. Over time, these groups seek out more powerful victims from which to harvest body parts, including high-level characters and humanoid creatures that have supernatural or magical abilities.

It is rumored that some ancient and powerful vivisectors are able to harvest the abilities of their prey, using such powers as their own for short periods of time before the organs rot away.

TYPICAL TREASURE

Vivisectors have no interest in wealth or weapons, but they covet protective magic items of all kinds, most commonly potions and rings. Though it has no mouth, a vivisector can ingest potions by pouring them into its carapace. Vivisectors have double standard treasure for their Challenge Rating. The vivisector presented in this entry has protective items worth 2,300 gp, so it might have additional treasure worth up to 100 gp.

VIVISECTORS IN EBERRON

Vivisectors are frequently found in the depths of Khyber, preying on explorers, Khyber shard prospectors, and the surface communities above. These grotesque creatures have been spotted in the deepest levels of Sharn's Cogs, and particularly grisly murders are often written off to the hunger of a vivisector. The dwarves of the Mror Holds face regular attacks by vivisectors, and some suspect that a great conclave of the creatures dwells deep beneath the Hoarfrost Mountains.

VIVISECTORS IN FAERÛN

The Underdark is the traditional home of vivisectors in Faerûn, and all the races of that subterranean realm fear these creatures. Rumors tell of a great hive of vivisectors located beneath the Thunder Peaks. There, one of their number is said to have attained great power, and is believed to be summoning its foul kin to its side for some dark purpose.

Illus. by S. Srisuwan

WILD HUNT

A giant elflike creature in a mithral breastplate, its helm bearing the proud antlers of a great stag, streaks across the sky on the back of a phantom stallion. Flames leap up in its wake, and four hounds the size of bears precede the rider. Silhouetted by the shimmering moon, the stag-helmed rider draws back a black bow, an arrow nocked for the kill.

MASTER OF THE HUNT CR 22

Usually CN Large fey
Init +15; **Senses** darkvision 60 ft., low-light vision; Listen +45, Spot +45
Languages Aquan, Auran, Common, Elven, Ignan, Sylvan, Terran

AC 42, touch 32, flat-footed 26
(–1 size, +15 Dex, +10 armor, +7 insight)
hp 560 (32 HD); **DR** 15/cold iron and epic
Immune electricity, exhaustion, fatigue, mind-affecting spells and abilities
Resist cold 20, fire 20; **SR** 30
Fort +24, **Ref** +33, **Will** +28

Speed 30 ft. (6 squares), fly 60 ft. (perfect); total freedom
Melee *+5 flaming burst halberd of speed* +33/+33/+28/+23/+18 (2d8+23 plus 1d6 fire/19–20/×3 plus 2d10 fire)
Ranged *+5 seeking mighty composite longbow* +36/+31/+26/+21 (2d6+17/×3) or
Ranged *+5 seeking mighty composite longbow* +28 (8d6+68/×3) with Manyshot or
Ranged *+5 seeking mighty composite longbow* +34/+34/+29/+24/+19 (2d6+17/×3) with Rapid Shot
Space 10 ft.; **Reach** 10 ft.
Base Atk +16; **Grp** +32
Atk Options Improved Precise Shot, Mounted Archery, Mounted Combat, Point Blank Shot, Power Attack, Precise Shot, moonhunter, selected prey
Special Actions moon eye, *summon mount*

Abilities Str 35, Dex 40, Con 38, Int 20, Wis 30, Cha 35
SA moon eye, moonhunter, selected prey, *summon mount*
Feats Improved Precise Shot, Manyshot, Mounted Archery, Mounted Combat, Point Blank Shot, Power Attack, Precise Shot, Rapid Shot, Track, Weapon Focus (halberd), Weapon Focus (composite longbow)
Skills Balance +50, Handle Animal +47, Hide +46, Knowledge (geography) +40, Knowledge (nature) +40, Listen +45, Move Silently +50, Ride +50, Search +40, Spot +45, Survival +45 (+47 following tracks, avoiding getting lost, avoiding hazards, or in aboveground natural environments)
Advancement —
Possessions *+5 mithral breastplate, +5 flaming burst halberd of speed, +5 seeking mighty composite longbow* (+12 Str bonus) with 30 adamantine arrows, 30 silver arrows, and 30 cold iron arrows, *quiver of Ehlonna*

Total Freedom (Su) A master of the hunt acts as if constantly under the effect of a *freedom of movement* spell. He ignores the maximum Dexterity bonus limitation of any armor he wears.

Moonhunter (Su) Whenever a master of the hunt shoots an arrow while outdoors when the moon is in the sky, the arrow grows to the size of a spear as soon as it is loosed from the bow. These immense arrows deal an extra 20 points of damage to any creature they strike that is outdoors while the moon is in the sky.

Moon Eye (Sp) The moon is the mirrored eye of the Wild Hunt. At will, as a swift action, a master of the hunt can use *discern location*, as the spell, against any creature outdoors while the moon is in the sky. Caster level 20th.

Selected Prey (Su) Three times per day, as a swift action, a master of the hunt can point to one opponent within 60 feet, marking that foe as selected prey. The selected prey glows with moonlight as if affected by a *faerie fire* spell. Further, the master of the hunt receives a +5 morale bonus on attack rolls and damage rolls against his selected prey, and all critical threats the master of the hunt scores against the selected prey are automatically confirmed. A master of the hunt can have only one selected prey at a time, and the effect ends when the moon sets.

Summon Mount (Sp) At will, as a swift action, a master of the hunt can use *phantom steed* as the spell, but he can create a mount only for himself. Caster level 20th.

HOUND OF THE HUNT CR 18

Usually CN Large magical beast
Init +15; **Senses** darkvision 60 ft., low-light vision, scent; Listen +19, Spot +19
Languages Sylvan

AC 35, touch 20, flat-footed 24; Dodge, Mobility
(–1 size, +11 Dex, +15 natural)
hp 370 (20 HD); **DR** 15/cold iron and magic
Immune electricity, exhaustion, fatigue, mind-affecting spells and abilities
Resist cold 10, fire 10; **SR** 25
Fort +25, **Ref** +23, **Will** +16

Speed 90 ft. (18 squares), fly 90 ft. (perfect); Spring Attack, total freedom
Melee bite +37 (2d6+25 plus dimensional anchor)
Space 10 ft.; **Reach** 10 ft.
Base Atk +20; **Grp** +41
Atk Options Power Attack, moonhunter, skirmish (+10d6)
Special Actions hunter's howl

Abilities Str 45, Dex 32, Con 36, Int 6, Wis 30, Cha 26
SA *dimensional anchor,* moonhunter, skirmish, hunter's howl
SQ freedom of movement
Feats Dodge, Improved Initiative, Mobility, Power Attack, Spring Attack, Track, Weapon Focus (bite)
Skills Hide +20, Listen +19, Move Silently +20, Spot +19, Survival +21
Advancement —

Total Freedom (Su) As the master of the hunt.

Dimensional Anchor (Su) Any creature hit by a hound of the hunt's bite is affected by *dimensional anchor,* as the spell, for 1 round. This effect allows no save or spell resistance.

Moonhunter (Su) Whenever a hound of the hunt bites a foe while outdoors when the moon is in the sky, the wound deals an extra 20 points of damage.

Skirmish (Ex) A hound of the hunt deals an extra 10d6 points of damage on all attacks made during a round in which it moves at least 10 feet. This extra damage applies only to attacks made on the hound's turn. A hound can deal this extra damage only to living creatures that have a discernible anatomy.

Hunter's Howl (Su) As a free action, a hound of the hunt can release an echoing howl. Those within a 120-foot-radius spread must succeed on a DC 28 Will save or be shaken for 1 minute. A creature that saves cannot be affected by that same hound of the hunt's howl for 24 hours.

Skills Hounds of the hunt are accomplished hunters that can stalk their prey as silently as a shadow. They have a +8 racial bonus on Hide and Move Silently checks and a +4 racial bonus on Listen and Spot checks.

The Wild Hunt sends the bravest heroes of the land fleeing before the master of the hunt and his hounds.

STRATEGIES AND TACTICS

A master of the hunt savors the hunting experience. He chooses one highly skilled or mighty creature to stalk, then runs that creature down in an exciting chase.

When his prey stands its ground or a master of the hunt tires of the chase, he marks his target with the selected prey ability. His hounds then charge in, tying up the victim and its allies in melee. The master fires arrows at his target to kill it, then disdainfully dispatches others foolish enough to stand against him.

SAMPLE ENCOUNTER

The Wild Hunt is a rare event that usually occurs toward the end of the year.

Night of the Hunt: In late autumn, a master of the hunt appears with four hounds, stalking the land and slaying the mighty. The hunter eventually chooses a PC who is particularly skilled at avoiding capture as prey. That character's allies oppose the hunt at their peril.

ECOLOGY

Masters of the hunt were fey monarchs who ruled their courts for centuries before the tedium of existence drove them to hunt powerful mortals. Now they spend their time searching for worthy foes. They are enduring, tireless, and immortal.

The hounds of the hunt are ferocious canines made bloodthirsty by centuries of training and magical alteration. They are almost as durable as their masters.

Environment: The Wild Hunt can roam across an entire world, but a master of the hunt prefers to stalk prey at night in the wide outdoors.

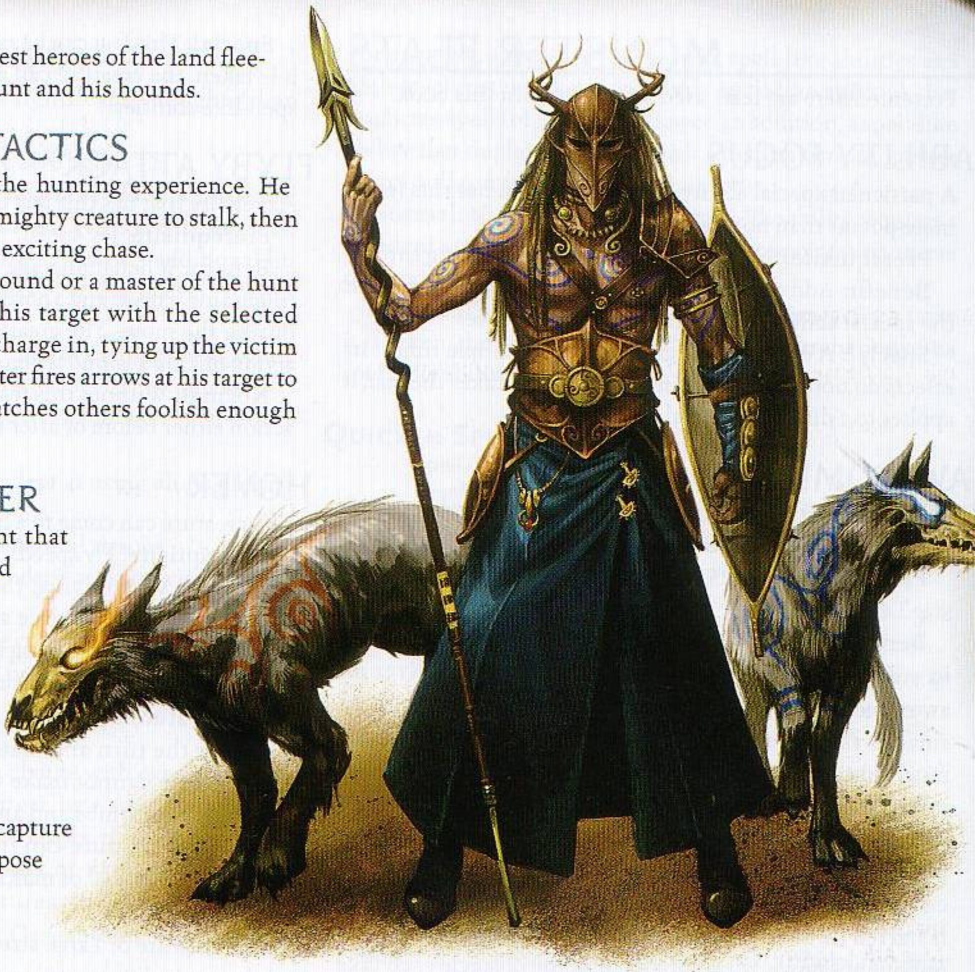
Typical Physical Characteristics: Masters of the hunt are lithe and regal elflike creatures, standing 8 feet in height and weighing 300 or more pounds.

Hounds of the hunt are slavering monstrosities the size of grizzly bears. Their coats glitter slightly as if covered in a sheen of starlight.

Alignment: A master of the hunt is an amoral creature that thrills in the pursuit and slaying of mortal foes. He isn't cruel, but he is certainly merciless. Those masters of the hunt that aren't chaotic neutral are chaotic evil.

TYPICAL TREASURE

Masters of the hunt care nothing for glittering gold or sparkling jewels. The thrill of the hunt is all they lust after. Their listed possessions are all they have.



The Wild Hunt

Illus. by E. Widermann

WILD HUNT LORE

Characters who have ranks in Knowledge (nature) can learn more about the Wild Hunt. When a character makes a successful skill check, the following lore is revealed, including the information from lower DCs.

Knowledge (Nature)

DC	Result
32	This large, elflike creature is a master of the hunt, a cruel fey that seeks to prove his skill against the mightiest foes. The four hounds that accompany him are hounds of the hunt, magical beasts totally loyal to their master. The master is an archer of incredible skill, and the hounds are frightful hunters with supernatural howls.
37	The moon is the eye of the Wild Hunt, and anyone under its light is more susceptible to the attacks of a master and his hounds. A master of the hunt can summon a steed instantly, and he can mark a foe as his quarry, making it easier to find and slay that creature.
42	A master of the hunt cannot be bargained with. Only those who elude him for a night or slay him can expect to survive. He is most vulnerable to epic weapons crafted from cold iron, while the hounds are vulnerable to cold iron weapons imbued with magic.

MONSTER FEATS

Presented here are feats used by monsters in this book.

ABILITY FOCUS

A particular special ability of a creature that has this feat is more potent than normal.

Prerequisite: Special ability that allows a saving throw.

Benefit: Add +2 to the DC for all saving throws against the special ability on which the creature focuses.

Special: A creature can gain this feat multiple times. Its effects do not stack. Each time the creature takes the feat, it applies to a different special ability.

AWESOME BLOW

A creature that has this feat can choose to deliver blows that send its smaller opponents flying like bowling pins.

Prerequisites: Str 25, Power Attack, Improved Bull Rush, size Large or larger.

Benefit: As a standard action, the creature can choose to subtract 4 from its melee attack roll and deliver an awesome blow. If the creature hits a corporeal opponent smaller than itself with an awesome blow, its opponent must succeed on a Reflex save (DC equal to damage dealt) or be knocked flying 10 feet in a direction of the attacking creature's choice and fall prone. The attacking creature can push the opponent only in a straight line, and the opponent can't move closer to the attacking creature than the square it started in. If an obstacle prevents the completion of the opponent's move, the opponent and the obstacle each take 1d6 points of damage, and the opponent stops in the space adjacent to the obstacle.

Special: A fighter can select Awesome Blow as one of his fighter bonus feats.

EMPOWER SPELL-LIKE ABILITY

The creature can use a spell-like ability with greater effect than normal.

Prerequisite: Spell-like ability at caster level 6th or higher.

Benefit: Choose one of the creature's spell-like abilities, subject to the restrictions below. The creature can use that ability as an empowered spell-like ability three times per day (or less, if the ability is normally usable only once or twice per day).

When a creature uses an empowered spell-like ability, all variable, numeric effects of the spell-like ability are increased by one half. Saving throws and opposed rolls are not affected. Spell-like abilities without random variables are not affected.

The creature can select only a spell-like ability duplicating a spell of a level less than or equal to half its caster level (round down) –2. For a summary, see the table in the description of the Quicken Spell-Like Ability feat.

Special: This feat can be taken multiple times. Each time it is taken, the creature can apply it to a different one of its spell-like abilities.

FLYBY ATTACK

A creature that has this feat can attack on the wing.

Prerequisite: Fly speed.

Benefit: When flying, the creature can take a move action (including a dive) and another standard action at any point during the move. The creature cannot take a second move action during a round when it makes a flyby attack.

Normal: Without this feat, the creature takes a standard action either before or after its move.

HOVER

The creature can come to a halt in midair.

Prerequisite: Fly speed.

Benefit: When flying, the creature can halt its forward motion and hover in place as a move action. It can then fly in any direction, including straight down or straight up, at half speed, regardless of its maneuverability.

If a creature begins its turn hovering, it can hover in place for the turn and take a full-round action. A hovering creature cannot make wing attacks, but it can attack with all other limbs and appendages it could use in a full attack. The creature can instead use a breath weapon or cast a spell instead of making physical attacks, if it could normally do so.

If a creature of Large size or larger hovers within 20 feet of the ground in an area with lots of loose debris, the draft from its wings creates a hemispherical cloud with a radius of 60 feet. The winds so generated can snuff torches, small campfires, exposed lanterns, and other small, open flames of non-magical origin. Clear vision within the cloud is limited to 10 feet. Creatures have concealment at 15 to 20 feet (20% miss chance). At 25 feet or more, creatures have total concealment (50% miss chance, and opponents cannot use sight to locate the creature).

Those caught in the cloud must succeed on a Concentration check (DC 10 + 1/2 creature's HD) to cast a spell.

Normal: Without this feat, a creature must keep moving when flying unless it has good or better maneuverability.

IMPROVED NATURAL ATTACK

The natural attacks of a creature that has this feat are more dangerous than its size and type would otherwise dictate.

Prerequisite: Natural weapon, base attack bonus +4.

Benefit: The damage for one of the creature's natural attack forms increases by one step, as if the creature's size had increased by one category: 1d2, 1d3, 1d4, 1d6, 1d8, 2d6, 3d6, 4d6, 6d6, 8d6, 12d6. A weapon or attack that deals 1d10 points of damage increases as follows: 1d10, 2d8, 3d8, 4d8, 6d8, 8d8, 12d8.

IMPROVED TOUGHNESS

A creature that has this feat is significantly tougher than normal.

Prerequisite: Base Fortitude save bonus +2.

Benefit: The creature gains a number of hit points equal to its current Hit Dice. Each time it gains a Hit Die (such as by gaining a level or advancing), it gains 1 additional hit point. If it loses a Hit Die (such as by losing a level), it loses 1 hit point permanently.

Special: A fighter can select Improved Toughness as one of his fighter bonus feats.

MULTIATTACK

A creature that has this feat is adept at using all its natural weapons at once.

Prerequisite: Three or more natural attacks.

Benefit: The creature's secondary attacks with natural weapons take only a –2 penalty.

Normal: Without this feat, the creature's secondary attacks with natural weapons take a –5 penalty.

POWERFUL CHARGE

A creature that has this feat can charge with extra force.

Prerequisites: Medium or larger, base attack bonus +1.

Benefit: When the creature charges, if its melee attack hits, it deals an extra 1d8 points of damage (if it is of Medium size). For Large creatures, the extra damage is 2d6 points; for Huge, 3d6; for Gargantuan, 4d6; and for Colossal, 6d6.

This feat works only when the creature makes a charge. It does not work when the creature is mounted. If the creature has the ability to make multiple attacks after a charge, it can apply this extra damage to only one of those attacks.

Special: A fighter can select Powerful Charge as one of his fighter bonus feats.

QUICKEN SPELL-LIKE ABILITY

A creature that has this feat can employ a spell-like ability with a moment's thought.

Prerequisite: Spell-like ability at caster level 10th or higher.

Benefit: The creature can use one of its spell-like abilities as a quickened spell-like ability three times per day (or less, if the ability is normally usable only once or twice per day).

Using a quickened spell-like ability is a swift action that does not provoke attacks of opportunity. The creature can perform another action—including the use of another spell-like ability—in the same round that it uses a quickened spell-like ability. The creature can use only one quickened spell-like ability per round.

The creature can select a only spell-like ability duplicating a spell of a level less than or equal to half its caster level (round down) minus 4. For a summary, see the table below. For example, a creature that uses its spell-like abilities as a 15th-level caster can quicken only spell-like abilities that duplicate spells of 3rd level or lower. In addition, a spell-like ability that duplicates a spell with a casting time of greater than 1 full round cannot be quickened.

Normal: Normally the use of a spell-like ability requires a standard action and provokes attacks of opportunity unless otherwise noted.

Special: This feat can be taken multiple times. Each time it is taken, the creature can apply it to a different one of its spell-like abilities.

QUICKEN SPELL-LIKE ABILITY

Spell Level	Caster Level to Quicken
0	8th
1st	10th
2nd	12th
3rd	14th
4th	16th
5th	18th
6th	20th
7th	—
8th	—
9th	—

SNATCH

The creature can grab opponents much smaller than it and hold them in its mouth or claw.

Prerequisite: Size Huge or larger.

Benefit: The creature can choose to start a grapple when it hits with a claw or bite attack, as though it had the improved grab special attack. If the creature gets a hold on an opponent three or more sizes smaller, it can squeeze each round for bite or claw damage. A snatched opponent held in the creature's mouth is not allowed a Reflex save against the creature's breath weapon (if any).

The creature can drop an opponent it has snatched as a free action or use a standard action to fling it aside. A flung opponent travels 1d6×10 feet, and takes 1d6 points of damage per 10 feet traveled. If the creature flings a snatched opponent when flying, the opponent takes this amount or falling damage, whichever is greater.

WINGOVER

The creature can change direction quickly while flying.

Prerequisite: Fly speed.

Benefit: A flying creature that has this feat can change direction quickly once each round as a free action. This feat allows it to turn up to 180 degrees regardless of its maneuverability, in addition to any other turns it is normally allowed. A creature cannot gain altitude during a round when it executes a wingover, but it can dive.

The change of direction consumes 10 feet of flying movement.

Glossary

This section provides definitions and descriptions of monster characteristics. If you come across a term earlier in this book that you're not familiar with, this is the place to find out more. These entries are presented as general rules that might have exceptions when applied to a specific creature—if a specific creature's entry differs from the rules provided in this section, that creature's ability is as an exception to the general rule. Statistical specifics of a particular creature's abilities, such as save DCs, are defined in that creature's entry.

Aberration Type: An aberration has a bizarre anatomy, strange abilities, an alien mindset, or any combination of the three.

Features: An aberration has the following features.

—d8 Hit Dice; good Will saves.

—Base attack bonus equal to 3/4 total Hit Dice (as cleric).

—Skill points equal to (2 + Int modifier, minimum 1) per Hit Die, with quadruple skill points for the first Hit Die.

Traits: An aberration possesses the following traits.

—Darkvision out to 60 feet.

—Proficient with its natural weapons. If humanoid in form, proficient with all simple weapons and any weapon it is described as using.

—Proficient with whatever type of armor (light, medium, or heavy) it is described as wearing, as well as all lighter types. Aberrations not indicated as wearing armor are not proficient with armor. Aberrations are proficient with shields if they are proficient with any form of armor.

—Aberrations eat, sleep, and breathe.

Ability Damage (Su): This special attack damages a specific ability score. If an attack that causes ability damage scores a critical hit, it deals twice the indicated amount of damage—if the damage is expressed as a die range, roll twice the normal amount of dice. Ability damage returns at the rate of 1 point per day per affected ability.

Ability Drain (Su): This special attack permanently reduces a specific ability score. If an attack that causes ability drain scores a critical hit, it deals twice the indicated amount of damage—if the damage is expressed as a die range, roll twice the normal amount of dice. A draining creature gains 5 temporary hit points (10 on a critical hit) whenever it drains an ability score, no matter how many points it drains. Temporary hit points gained in this way last for up to 1 hour.

Some ability drain attacks allow a Fortitude save (DC 10 + 1/2 draining creature's racial HD + draining creature's Cha modifier). If no saving throw is mentioned, none is allowed.

Air Subtype: This subtype usually is used for elementals and outsiders with a connection to the Elemental Plane Air. Air creatures have fly speeds and usually have perfect maneuverability (see Movement Modes, page 215).

Alternate Form (Su): A creature that has this special quality has the ability to assume one or more specific alternate forms. A true seeing spell or ability reveals the creature's natural form. A creature using alternate form reverts to its natural form when killed, but separated body parts retain their shape. A creature cannot use alternate form to take the form of a creature that has a template. Assuming an alternate form results in the following changes to the creature:

—The creature retains the type and subtype of its original form. It gains the size of its new form.

—The creature loses the natural weapons, natural armor, and movement modes of its original form, as well as any extraordinary special attacks of its original form not derived from class levels (such as the barbarian's rage class feature).

—The creature gains the natural weapons, natural armor, movement modes, and extraordinary special attacks of its new form.

—The creature retains the special qualities of its original form. It does not gain any special qualities of its new form.

—The creature retains the spell-like abilities and supernatural attacks of its old form (except for breath weapons and gaze attacks). It does not gain the spell-like abilities or supernatural attacks of its new form.

—The creature gains the physical ability scores (Str, Dex, Con) of its new form. It retains the mental ability scores (Int, Wis, Cha) of its original form.

—The creature retains its HD, hit points, base attack bonus, and base save bonuses, although its total attack and save modifiers might change due to a change in ability scores.

—The creature retains any spellcasting ability it had in its original form, although it must be able to speak intelligibly to cast spells with verbal components and it must have humanlike hands to cast spells with somatic components.

—The creature is effectively camouflaged as a creature of its new form, and it gains a +10 bonus on Disguise checks if it uses this ability to create a disguise.

—Any gear worn or carried by the creature that can't be worn or carried in its new form instead falls to the ground in its space. If the creature changes size, any gear it wears or carries that can be worn or carried in its new form changes size to match the new size. (Nonhumanoid-shaped creatures can't wear armor designed for humanoid-shaped creatures, and vice versa.) Gear returns to normal size if dropped.

Aligned Strike (Su): Attacks made by a creature that has this ability are treated as aligned for the purpose of overcoming damage reduction. When it applies, "aligned strike" appears in the Atk Options line of a creature's statistics block, followed in parentheses by a specific alignment or alignments (chaotic, evil, good, or lawful).

Alignment: This line in a monster entry gives the alignment that the creature is most likely to have. Entries that detail a general creature, rather than a specific individual, include a qualifier that indicates how broadly that alignment applies to all monsters of that kind.

Always: The creature is born with the indicated alignment. The creature might have a hereditary predisposition to the alignment or come from a plane that predetermines it. It is possible for individuals to change alignment, but such individuals are either unique or rare exceptions.

Usually: More than 50% of these creatures have the given alignment. This could be due to strong cultural influences, or it might be a legacy of the creatures' origin.

Often: The creature tends toward the given alignment, either by nature or nurture, but not strongly. A plurality (40–50%) of individuals has the given alignment, but exceptions are common.

Animal Type: An animal is a living, nonhuman creature, usually a vertebrate with no magical abilities and no innate capacity for language or culture.

Features: An animal has the following features.

—d8 Hit Dice; good Fortitude and Reflex saves.

—Base attack bonus equal to 3/4 total Hit Dice (as cleric).

—Skill points equal to (2 + Int modifier, minimum 1) per Hit Die, with quadruple skill points for the first Hit Die.

Traits: An animal possesses the following traits.

—Low-light vision.

—Proficient with its natural weapons only. A noncombative herbivore uses its natural weapons as a secondary attack. Such attacks are made with a –5 penalty on the creature's attack rolls, and the animal receives only 1/2 its Strength modifier as a damage adjustment.

—Proficient with no armor unless trained for war.

—Intelligence score of 1 or 2 (no creature that has an Intelligence score of 3 or higher can be an animal).

—Alignment: Always neutral.

—Treasure: None.

—Animals eat, sleep, and breathe.

Aquatic Subtype: These creatures have swim speeds and thus can move in water without making Swim checks. An aquatic creature can breathe underwater. It cannot also breathe air unless it has the amphibious special quality.

Augmented Subtype: A creature receives this subtype whenever something happens to change its original type. Some creatures (those with an inherited template) are born with this subtype; others acquire it when they take on an acquired template. The augmented subtype is paired with the creature's original type. For example, a wizard's raven familiar is a magical beast (augmented animal). A creature that has the augmented subtype usually has the traits of its current type, but the features of its original type. For example, a wizard's raven familiar has an animal's features and the traits of a magical beast.

Baatezu Subtype: Many devils belong to the race of evil outsiders known as the baatezu.

Traits: A baatezu has the following traits.

—See in Darkness (Su): All baatezu can see perfectly in darkness of any kind, even that created by a deeper darkness spell.

—Telepathy.

—Immunity to fire and poison.

—Resistance to acid 10 and cold 10.

—Summon (Sp): Baatezu share the ability to summon others of their kind (the success chance and type of baatezu summoned are noted in each monster description).

Blind: A blind creature has no visual senses and is thusly immune to gaze attacks, visual effects, illusions, and other attack forms that rely on sight. Such creatures usually have blindsense or blindsight.

Blindsense (Ex): Using nonvisual senses, such as acute smell or hearing, a creature that has blindsense notices creatures it cannot see. The creature usually does not need to make Spot or Listen checks to pinpoint the location of a creature within range of its blindsense ability, provided that it has line of effect to that creature. Any opponent the creature cannot see still has total concealment against the creature that has blindsense, and the creature still has the normal miss chance when attacking foes that have concealment. Visibility still affects the movement of a creature that has blindsense. A creature that has blindsense is still denied its Dexterity bonus to Armor Class against attacks from creatures it cannot see.

Blindsight (Ex): This ability is similar to blindsense, but is far more discerning. Using nonvisual senses, such as sensitivity to vibrations, keen smell, acute hearing, or echolocation, a creature that has blindsight maneuvers and fights as well as a sighted creature. Invisibility, darkness, and most kinds of concealment are irrelevant, though the creature must have line of effect to a creature or object to discern that creature or object. The ability's range is specified in the creature's descriptive text. The creature usually does not need to make Spot or Listen checks to notice creatures within range of its blindsight ability. Unless noted otherwise, blindsight is continuous, and the creature need do nothing to use it. Some forms of blindsight, however, must be triggered as a free action. If a creature must trigger its blindsight ability, the creature gains the benefits of blindsight only during its turn.

Breath Weapon (Su): A breath weapon attack usually deals damage and is often based on some type of energy (such as fire). Such breath weapons allow a Reflex save for half damage (DC 10 + 1/2 breathing creature's racial HD + breathing creature's Con modifier; the exact DC is given in the creature's descriptive text). A creature is immune to its own breath weapon unless otherwise noted. Some breath weapons allow a Fortitude save or a Will save instead of a Reflex save.

Chaotic Subtype: A subtype usually applied only to outsiders native to the chaotic-aligned Outer Planes. Most creatures that have this subtype also have chaotic alignments; however, if their alignments change they still retain the subtype. Any effect that depends on alignment affects a creature that has this subtype as if the creature has a chaotic alignment, no matter what its alignment actually is. The creature also suffers effects according to its actual alignment. A creature that has the chaotic subtype has the aligned strike (chaotic) ability. It overcomes damage reduction as if its natural weapons and any weapons it wields were chaotic-aligned (see Damage Reduction).

Class Skills: Any skill in which a monster has acquired at least one rank or in which the creature has a racial bonus is considered a class skill for that kind of creature. Some monsters, such as the true dragons, have their class skills explicitly defined. Other monsters' class skills can be determined from their statistics blocks.

Skills shown in an entry merely because of synergy with another skill are not class skills. For example, a banshrae's class skills are Balance, Bluff, Climb, Disguise, Escape Artist, Hide, Jump, Knowledge (nature), Listen, Move Silently, Perform, Spot, and Tumble. Diplomacy, Intimidate, Survival, and Use Rope are mentioned in the creature's statistics block because of the synergy benefit granted by other skills. The only exceptions to this rule are creatures that have a climb speed, which have Climb as a class skill, and creatures that have a swim speed, which have Swim as a class skill.

Cold Subtype: A creature that has the cold subtype has immunity to cold. It has vulnerability to fire, which means it takes half again as much (+50%) damage as normal from fire, regardless of whether a saving throw is allowed, or if the save is a success or failure.

Constrict (Ex): A creature that has this special attack can crush an opponent, dealing bludgeoning damage, after making a successful grapple check. The amount of damage is given in the creature's entry. If the creature also has the improved grab ability (see page 212), it deals constriction damage in addition to damage dealt by the weapon used to grab.

Construct Type: A construct is an animated object or artificially constructed creature.

Features: A construct has the following features.

—10-sided Hit Dice; no good saving throws.

—Base attack bonus equal to 3/4 total Hit Dice (as cleric).

—Skill points equal to (2 + Int modifier, minimum 1) per Hit Die, with quadruple skill points for the first Hit Die, if the construct has an Intelligence score. However, most constructs are mindless and gain no skill points or feats.

Traits: A construct possesses the following traits.

—Darkvision out to 60 feet.

—Low-light vision.

—Because its body is a mass of unliving matter, a construct is hard to destroy. It gains bonus hit points based on size: 10 for a Small construct, 20 for a Medium, 30 for a Large, 40 for a Huge, 60 for a Gargantuan, and 80 for a Colossal construct.

—Cannot heal damage on its own, but it can often be repaired by exposure to a certain kind of effect or through the use of the Craft Construct feat (*MM* 303). A construct with the fast healing special quality still benefits from that quality.

—Immunity to ability damage, ability drain, critical hits, death effects, disease, energy drain, exhaustion, fatigue, mind-affecting spells and abilities, necromancy effects, nonlethal damage, paralysis, poison, *sleep* effects, and stunning.

—Immunity to any effect that requires a Fortitude save, unless the effect also works on objects or is harmless.

—Not at risk of death from massive damage (*PH* 145). Immediately destroyed when reduced to 0 hit points or fewer.

—Since it was never alive, a construct cannot be raised or resurrected.

—No Constitution score.

—Proficient with its natural weapons only, unless humanoid in form, in which case proficient with any weapon mentioned in its entry.

—Proficient with no armor.

—Constructs do not eat, sleep, or breathe.

Damage Reduction (Ex or Su): A creature that has damage reduction (DR) ignores some of the damage from weapons and natural attacks that don't meet certain criteria. Wounds heal immediately, or the weapon bounces off harmlessly, and the attacker knows the attack was ineffective. Damage reduction doesn't reduce the damage from energy attacks, spells, spell-like abilities, and supernatural abilities.

The DR entry starts by denoting amount of damage ignored ("X" in the following examples, but usually 5 to 15 points) followed by a slash and the type of damage, material, or magic that overcomes the ability. If a weapon or attack doesn't have the indicated quality or qualities, that attack has its damage reduced by the number before the slash to a minimum of 0 points of damage. Possible ways to overcome DR include:

Aligned: Some damage reduction can be overcome by chaotic-, evil-, good-, or lawful-aligned weapons, such as with the entry DR X/lawful. Other than the inherent abilities of some magic weapons, an aligned weapon can be acquired through an *align weapon* spell or from an alignment subtype (see Aligned Strike). Damage reduction that can be overcome only by aligned weapons is supernatural (Su).

Damage Type: Bludgeoning, piercing, or slashing damage can overcome some damage reduction. A humble club, which deals bludgeoning damage, overcomes DR X/bludgeoning. This type of DR is extraordinary (Ex).

Epic: Epic weapons are arms that have a magical enhancement bonus of +6 or higher, and such weapons are required to harm the mightiest monsters. If a creature has DR X/epic, it also has the epic strike ability (see page 210). Damage reduction that can be overcome only by epic weapons is supernatural.

Magic: When magic can overcome a creature's damage reduction, a weapon with a +1 or higher magical enhancement bonus is required. If a creature has DR X/magic, it also has the magic strike ability (see page 214). This type of DR is supernatural.

Nothing: When a DR entry has a dash after the slash (DR X/—), no weapon can overcome it. Insurmountable damage reduction is extraordinary.

Special Material: A special material, such as adamantine, alchemical silver, or cold iron, is required to overcome other forms of damage reduction. For example, potent fey have DR that can be overcome by cold iron (DR X/cold iron). Damage reduction that is overcome only by adamantine is extraordinary, but DR that can be overcome only by cold iron or silver is supernatural.

Special Situations: A few forms of damage reduction can be overcome by more than one factor. Such DR appears with the word "or" between qualities, as in DR X/cold iron or good. A cold iron weapon or a good-aligned weapon can overcome such DR.

Other forms of damage reduction can be overcome only by attacks that combine qualities. Such DR appears with the word "and" between qualities, as in DR X/silver and good. A weapon that falls into one category but not the other is of no help in overcoming such damage reduction—it must have all the indicated qualities to be effective.

In these cases, the damage reduction is supernatural if any quality required to overcome it is considered part of a supernatural form of DR. Otherwise, the damage reduction is extraordinary.

Darkvision (Ex): A creature that has this special quality can see in the dark, out to a distance given in the creature's entry. Darkvision is black and white only, but it is otherwise like normal sight, and a creature that has darkvision can function just fine with no light at all.

Dragon Type: A dragon is a reptilelike creature, usually winged, with magical or unusual abilities.

Features: A dragon has the following features.

—12-sided Hit Dice; good Fortitude, Reflex, and Will saves.

—Base attack bonus equal to total Hit Dice (as fighter).

—Skill points equal to (6 + Int modifier, minimum 1) per Hit Die, with quadruple skill points for the first Hit Die.

Traits: A dragon possesses the following traits.

—Darkvision out to 60 feet.

—Low-light vision.

—Immunity to *sleep* effects and paralysis effects.

—Proficient with its natural weapons only unless humanoid in form, in which case proficient with all simple weapons and any weapons mentioned in its entry.

—Proficient with no armor.

—Dragons eat, sleep, and breathe.

—Dragons qualify for classes, prestige classes, racial substitution levels, feats, powers, and spells that require the dragonblood subtype.

Dragonblood Subtype: A creature that has the dragonblood subtype has a strong affinity to dragons—which means that spells, effects, powers, and abilities that affect or target dragons also affect it. The subtype qualifies a creature to use magic items normally usable only by dragons, and it qualifies the creature to take feats that have the subtype as a prerequisite. The dragonblood subtype also makes creatures subject to harmful effects that affect dragons.

The dragonblood subtype does not confer the dragon type or any traits associated with that type. For instance, it does not give a creature frightful presence.

If a creature that has the dragonblood subtype somehow acquires the dragon type, it loses this subtype.

Earth Subtype: This subtype usually is used for elementals and outsiders with a connection to the Elemental Plane of Earth. Earth creatures usually have burrow speeds, and most earth creatures can burrow through solid rock.

Effective Character Level (ECL): This number represents a creature's overall power relative to that of a character from the Player's Handbook. A creature that has an ECL of 10 is roughly equivalent to a 10th-level character. A creature's

ECL is the sum of its Hit Dice (including class levels) and level adjustment. For instance, a kuo-toa exalted whip has 10 HD and a +4 level adjustment. It is the equivalent of a 14th-level character.

Elemental Type: An elemental is a being composed of one of the four classical elements: air, earth, fire, or water.

Features: An elemental has the following features.

—8-sided Hit Dice; good saves depend on the element: Fortitude (earth, water) or Reflex (air, fire).

—Base attack bonus equal to 3/4 total Hit Dice (as cleric).

—Skill points equal to (2 + Int modifier, minimum 1) per Hit Die, with quadruple skill points for the first Hit Die.

Traits: An elemental possesses the following traits.

—Darkvision out to 60 feet.

—Immunity to critical hits, paralysis, poison, *sleep* effects, and stunning.

—Not subject to flanking.

—Unlike most other living creatures, an elemental's soul and body form one unit. When an elemental is slain, no soul is set loose. Spells that restore souls to their bodies, such as *raise dead, reincarnate,* and *resurrection,* don't work on an elemental. It takes a different magical effect, such as *limited wish, wish, miracle,* or *true resurrection* to restore a slain elemental to life.

—Proficient with natural weapons only, unless humanoid in form, in which case proficient with all simple weapons and any weapons mentioned in its entry.

—Proficient with whatever type of armor (light, medium, or heavy) that it is described as wearing, as well as all lighter types. Elementals not indicated as wearing armor are not proficient with armor. Elementals are proficient with shields if they are proficient with any form of armor.

—Elementals do not eat, sleep, or breathe.

Energy Drain (Su): This attack saps a living opponent's vital energy and happens automatically when a melee or ranged attack hits. Each successful energy drain bestows one or more negative levels. If an attack that includes an energy drain scores a critical hit, it drains twice the given amount. A draining creature gains 5 temporary hit points (10 on a critical hit) for each negative level it bestows on an opponent. These temporary hit points last for up to 1 hour.

An affected opponent takes a –1 penalty on all skill checks and ability checks, attack rolls, and saving throws, and loses one effective level or Hit Die (whenever is used in a die roll or calculation) for each negative level. A spellcaster loses one spell slot of the highest level of spells she can cast and (if applicable) one prepared spell of that level; this loss persists until the negative level is removed.

Negative levels remain until 24 hours have passed or until they are removed with a spell, such as *restoration*. If a negative level is not removed before 24 hours have passed, the affected creature must make a Fortitude save (DC 10 + 1/2 draining creature's racial HD + draining creature's Cha modifier). On a success, the negative level goes away with no harm to the creature. On a failure, the negative level goes away, but the creature's level is also reduced by one. A separate saving throw is required for each negative level.

Epic Strike (Su): Natural weapon attacks made by a creature that has this ability are treated as epic for the purpose of overcoming damage reduction. When it applies, "epic strike" appears in the Atk Options line of a creature's statistics block.

Evil Subtype: A subtype usually applied only to outsiders native to the evil-aligned Outer Planes. Evil outsiders are also called fiends. Most creatures that have this subtype also have evil alignments; however, if their alignments change, they still retain the subtype. Any effect that depends on alignment affects a creature that has this subtype as if the creature has an evil alignment, no matter what its alignment actually is. The creature also suffers effects according to its actual alignment. A creature that has the evil subtype has the aligned strike (evil) ability. It overcomes damage reduction as if its natural weapons and any weapons it wields were evil-aligned (see Damage Reduction).

Extraordinary (Ex) Abilities: Extraordinary abilities are nonmagical, don't become ineffective in an *antimagic field*, and are not subject to any effect that disrupts magic. Using an extraordinary ability is a free action unless otherwise noted.

Extraplanar Subtype: A subtype applied to any creature when it is on a plane other than its native plane, including the Material Plane. A creature that travels the planes can gain or lose this subtype as it goes from plane to plane. However, no creature has the extraplanar subtype while on a transitive plane (the Astral Plane, the Ethereal Plane, and the Plane of Shadow). This book assumes that encounters take place on the Material Plane, and every creature whose native plane is not the Material Plane has the extraplanar subtype. Such creatures lose this subtype while on their home plane, just as creatures native to the Material Plane gain the extraplanar subtype while on other planes.

Every extraplanar creature in this book has a home plane mentioned in its entry. These home planes are taken from the Great Wheel cosmology (DMG 147–167). If your campaign uses a different cosmology, you must assign different home planes to extraplanar creatures.

Fast Healing (Ex): A creature that has the fast healing special quality regains hit points at an exceptionally fast rate, usually 1 or more hit points per round. Except as noted here, fast healing is like natural healing (*PH* 146). Fast healing does not restore hit points lost from starvation, thirst, or suffocation, and it does not allow a creature to regrow lost body parts. Unless otherwise stated, it does not allow lost body parts to be reattached.

Favored Class: A monster that takes levels in a class (or more than one class) has a favored class, just as player characters do. In addition, a monster's racial Hit Dice also count as a favored class. If the monster becomes a multiclass character, neither its favored class nor its racial Hit Dice count when determining whether the creature takes an experience point penalty.

Fear (Su or Sp): Fear attacks can have various effects. If a fear effect allows a saving throw, it is a Will save (DC 10 + 1/2 fearsome creature's racial HD + creature's Cha modifier). All fear attacks are mind-affecting fear effects.

Fear Aura (Su): The use of this ability is a free action. The aura can freeze an opponent or function like the *fear* spell, among other effects. A fear aura is an area effect.

Fear Cones (Sp) and Rays (Su): These effects usually work like the *fear* spell.

Fey Type: A fey is a creature that has supernatural abilities and connections to nature or to some other force or place. Fey are usually human-shaped.

Features: A fey has the following features.

—6-sided Hit Dice; good Reflex and Will saves.

—Base attack bonus equal to 1/2 total Hit Dice (as wizard).

—Skill points equal to (6 + Int modifier, minimum 1) per Hit Die, with quadruple skill points for the first Hit Die.

Traits: A fey possesses the following traits.

—Low-light vision.

—Proficient with all simple weapons and any weapons mentioned in its entry.

—Proficient with whatever type of armor (light, medium, or heavy) that it is described as wearing, as well as all lighter types. Fey not indicated as wearing armor are not proficient with armor. Fey are proficient with shields if they are proficient with any form of armor.

—Fey eat, sleep, and breathe.

Fire Subtype: A creature that has the fire subtype has immunity to fire. It has vulnerability to cold, which means it takes half again as much (+50%) damage as normal from cold, regardless of whether a saving throw is allowed, or if the save is a success or failure.

Flight (Ex or Su): A creature that has this ability can cease or resume flight as a free action. If the ability is supernatural, it becomes ineffective in an *antimagic field*, and the creature loses its ability to fly for as long as the antimagic effect persists.

Frightful Presence (Ex): This special attack makes a creature's presence unsettling to foes. It takes effect when the creature performs some sort of dramatic action, such as charging, attacking, or snarling. Opponents within range who witness the action might become frightened or shaken. The range is usually 30 feet, and the duration is usually 5d6 rounds.

This ability affects only those opponents with fewer Hit Dice or levels than the creature has. An affected opponent can resist the effect with a successful Will save (DC 10 + 1/2 frightful creature's racial HD + frightful creature's Cha modifier). An opponent that succeeds on the saving throw is immune to that same creature's frightful presence for 24 hours. Frightful presence is a mind-affecting fear effect.

Gaze (Su): A gaze special attack takes effect when opponents look at the creature's eyes. The attack can have almost any sort of effect—petrification, death, charm, and so on. The typical range is 30 feet.

The type of saving throw for a gaze attack varies, but it is usually a Will or Fortitude save (DC 10 + 1/2 gazing creature's racial HD + gazing creature's Cha modifier). A successful saving throw negates the effect. A monster's gaze attack is described in abbreviated form in its description.

Gaze attacks can affect ethereal opponents. A creature is immune to gaze attacks of others of its kind. Allies of a creature that has a gaze attack might be affected. All the creature's allies are considered to be averting their eyes from the creature that has the gaze attack (see below). The creature also can veil its eyes, thus negating its gaze attack.

Passive Gaze Attack: Each opponent within range of a gaze attack must attempt a saving throw each round at the beginning of his or her turn in the initiative order. Only looking directly at a creature that has a gaze attack leaves an opponent vulnerable. Opponents can avoid the need to make the saving throw by not looking at the creature, using one of two methods.

Averting Eyes: The opponent avoids looking at the creature's face, instead looking at its body, watching its shadow, tracking it in a reflective surface, and so on. Each round, the opponent has a 50% chance to not need to make a saving throw against the gaze attack. The creature that has the gaze attack, however, gains concealment against that opponent.

Closing Eyes: The opponent acts in a way so it cannot see the creature that has the gaze attack at all—closing its eyes, turning its back, or even wearing a blindfold. The creature that has the gaze attack gains total concealment against such an opponent.

Active Gaze Attack: A creature that has a gaze attack can actively gaze as a standard action by choosing a target within range. That opponent must attempt a saving throw but can try to avoid this as described above. Thus, it is possible for an opponent to save against a creature's gaze twice during the same round, once before the opponent's action and once during the creature's turn.

Giant Type: A giant is a humanoid-shaped creature of great strength, usually of at least Large size.

Features: A giant has the following features.

—8-sided Hit Dice; good Fortitude saves.

—Base attack bonus equal to 3/4 total Hit Dice (as cleric).

—Skill points equal to (2 + Int modifier, minimum 1) per Hit Die, with quadruple skill points for the first Hit Die.

Traits: A giant possesses the following traits.

—Low-light vision.

—Proficient with all simple and martial weapons, as well as any natural weapons.

—Proficient with whatever type of armor (light, medium or heavy) it is described as wearing, as well as all lighter types. Giants not described as wearing armor are not proficient with armor. Giants are proficient with shields if they are proficient with any form of armor.

—Giants eat, sleep, and breathe.

Goblinoid Subtype: Goblinoids are stealthy humanoids who live by hunting and raiding. They all speak Goblin.

Good Subtype: A subtype usually applied only to outsiders native to the good-aligned Outer Planes. Most creatures that have this subtype also have good alignments; however, if their alignments change, they still retain the subtype. Any effect that depends on alignment affects a creature that has this subtype as if the creature has a good alignment, no matter what its alignment actually is. The creature also suffers effects according to its actual alignment. A creature that has the good subtype has the aligned strike (good) ability. It overcomes damage reduction as if its natural weapons and any weapons it wields were good-aligned (see Damage Reduction).

Humanoid Type: A humanoid usually has two arms, two legs, and one head, or a humanlike torso, arms, and a head. Humanoids have few or no supernatural or extraordinary abilities, but most can speak and usually have well-developed societies. They are usually Small or Medium. Every humanoid creature also has a subtype, such as elf, goblinoid, or reptilian.

Humanoids with 1 Hit Die exchange the features of their humanoid Hit Die for the class features of a PC or NPC class. Humanoids of this sort are presented as 1st-level warriors, which means that they have average combat ability and poor saving throws.

Humanoids with more than 1 Hit Die (for example, gnolls and bugbears) are the only humanoids who make use of the features of the humanoid type.

Features: A humanoid has the following features.

—8-sided Hit Dice, or by character class; good Reflex saves (usually; a humanoid's good save varies).

—Base attack bonus equal to 3/4 total Hit Dice (as cleric).

—Skill points equal to (2 + Int modifier, minimum 1) per Hit Die, with quadruple skill points for the first Hit Die, or by character class.

Traits: A humanoid possesses the following traits.

—Proficient with all simple weapons, or by character class.

—Proficient with whatever type of armor (light, medium, or heavy) it is described as wearing, or by character class. If a humanoid does not have a class and wears armor, it is proficient with that type of armor and all lighter types. Humanoids not indicated as wearing armor are not proficient with armor. Humanoids are proficient with shields if they are proficient with any form of armor.

—Humanoids breathe, eat, and sleep.

Immunity: A creature that has immunity to an effect is never harmed (or helped) by that effect. A creature cannot suppress an immunity to receive a beneficial effect.

Improved Grab (Ex): If a creature that has this special attack hits with a melee weapon (usually a claw or bite attack), it deals normal damage and attempts to start a grapple as a free action without provoking attacks of opportunity (see Grapple, PH 155). No initial touch attack is required.

Unless otherwise noted, improved grab works only against opponents at least one size category smaller than the creature. The creature has the option to conduct the grapple normally, or simply use the part of its body it used in the improved grab to hold the opponent. If it chooses to do the latter, it takes a –20 penalty on grapple checks, but is not considered grappled itself; the creature does not lose its Dexterity bonus to AC, still threatens an area, and can use its remaining attacks against other opponents.

A successful hold does not deal any extra damage unless the creature also has the constrict special attack. If the creature does not constrict, each successful grapple check it makes during successive rounds automatically deals the damage indicated for the attack that established the hold. Otherwise, it deals constriction damage as well (the amount is given in the creature's descriptive text).

When a creature gets a hold after an improved grab attack, it pulls the opponent into its space. This act does not provoke attacks of opportunity. It can even move (possibly carrying away the opponent), provided it can drag the opponent's weight.

Incorporeal Subtype: Some creatures are incorporeal by nature, and others (such as those that become ghosts) can acquire the incorporeal subtype. An incorporeal creature has no physical body. It can be harmed only by other incorporeal creatures, magic weapons or creatures that strike as magic weapons, and spells, spell-like abilities, or supernatural abilities. It is immune to all nonmagical attack forms. Even when hit by spells (including touch spells) or magic weapons, it has a 50% chance to ignore any damage from a corporeal source (except for positive energy, negative energy, force effects such as *magic missile*, or attacks made with ghost touch weapons). Nondamaging effects affect incorporeal creatures normally unless they require corporeal targets to function (such as *implosion*) or they create a corporeal effect that incorporeal creatures would normally be unaffected by (such as *web* or *wall of stone*). Although it is not a magical attack, holy water can affect incorporeal undead, but a hit with holy water has a 50% chance of not affecting an incorporeal creature.

An incorporeal creature's attacks pass through (ignore) natural armor, armor, and shields, although deflection bonuses and force effects (such as *mage armor*) work normally against it. Nonmagical attacks made by an incorporeal creature with a melee weapon have no effect on corporeal targets, and any melee attack an incorporeal creature makes with a magic weapon against a corporeal target has a 50% miss chance, except for attacks it makes with a ghost touch weapon, which are made normally (no miss chance).

Equipment worn or carried by an incorporeal creature is also incorporeal as long as that equipment remains in the creature's possession. An object the creature relinquishes loses its incorporeal quality, and the creature loses the ability to manipulate the object. If an incorporeal creature uses a thrown weapon or a ranged weapon, that projectile becomes corporeal as soon as it is fired and can affect a corporeal target normally (no miss chance). Magic items possessed by an incorporeal creature work normally with respect to their effects on the creature or on another target. Similarly, spells cast by an incorporeal creature affect corporeal creatures normally.

An incorporeal creature has no natural armor bonus, but it has a deflection bonus to AC equal to its Charisma bonus or +1, whichever is higher.

An incorporeal creature cannot pass through a force effect. It can enter or pass through solid objects, but it must remain adjacent to the object's exterior. So it cannot pass entirely through an object whose space is larger than its own. It has an innate sense of direction, allowing it to move at full speed even when it cannot see. Although an incorporeal creature inside an object can sense the presence of creatures or objects in a square adjacent to its current location, such objects or creatures have total concealment (50% miss chance) against its attacks as long as it remains inside the object. To see farther from the object it is inside and attack normally, the incorporeal creature must emerge. While inside a solid object, an incorporeal creature receives a +2 bonus on Listen checks. An incorporeal creature inside an object has total cover, but when it attacks a creature outside the object, it only has cover.

An incorporeal creature can pass through and operate in water as easily as it does in air. It cannot fall or take falling damage. It cannot make trip or grapple attacks, nor can it be tripped or grappled. In fact, it cannot take any physical action that moves or manipulates an opponent or that foe's equipment, nor is it subject to such actions.

An incorporeal creature moves silently and cannot be heard with Listen checks if it doesn't wish to be. Further, it has no weight and cannot set off traps that are triggered by weight. It has no Strength score, so its Dexterity modifier applies to its melee attacks and its ranged attacks. Nonvisual senses, such as scent and blindsight, are either ineffective or only partly effective with regard to incorporeal creatures.

Lawful Subtype: A subtype usually applied only to outsiders native to the lawful-aligned Outer Planes. Most creatures that have this subtype also have lawful alignments; however, if their alignments change, they still retain the subtype. Any effect that depends on alignment affects a creature that has this subtype as if the creature has a lawful alignment, no matter what its alignment actually is. The creature also suffers effects according to its actual alignment. A creature that has the lawful subtype has the aligned strike (lawful) ability. It overcomes damage reduction as if its natural weapons and any weapons it wields were lawful-aligned (see Damage Reduction).

Level Adjustment: Certain monsters can used as the basis for interesting, viable player characters. These creatures have a level adjustment entry, which is a number that is added to the creature's total Hit Dice to arrive at its effective character level. A creature that has multiple special abilities is more powerful as a player character than its Hit Dice alone indicate. For example, a kuo-toa's level adjustment +3 indicates that a 1st-level kuo-toa wizard is the equivalent of a 3rd-level character.

Level adjustment is not the same as an adjustment to a creature's Challenge Rating because of some special qualities it possesses. Challenge Rating reflects how difficult an opponent is to fight in a limited number of encounters. Level adjustment shows how powerful a creature is as a player character or cohort in campaign play. For instance, a drow receives a +1 adjustment to its Challenge Rating to account for its special abilities, indicating that it's tougher in a fight than its Hit Dice would suggest, but its level adjustment is +2 to balance its abilities over long-term play.

Living Construct Subtype: A living construct is a new subtype of construct, a created being given sentience and free will through powerful and complex creation magic. Living constructs combine aspects of both constructs and living creatures, as detailed below.

Features: A living construct derives its Hit Dice, base attack bonus progression, saving throws, and skill points from the class it selects.

Traits: A living construct possesses the following traits (unless otherwise noted in a creature's entry).

—Unlike other constructs, a living construct has a Constitution score. A living construct does not gain bonus hit points by size but gains (or loses) bonus hit points through a Constitution bonus (or penalty) as with other living creatures.

—Unlike other constructs, a living construct does not have low-light vision or darkvision.

—Unlike other constructs, a living construct is not immune to mind-affecting spells and abilities.

—Immunity to poison, *sleep* effects, paralysis, disease, nausea, fatigue, exhaustion, and energy drain.

—A living construct cannot heal damage naturally.

—Unlike other constructs, living constructs are subject to extra damage from critical hits, effects requiring a Fortitude save, death from massive damage, nonlethal damage, stunning, ability damage, ability drain, and death effects or necromancy effects.

—Unlike other constructs, a living construct can use the run action.

—Living constructs can be affected by spells that target living creatures as well as by those that target constructs. Damage dealt to a living construct can be healed by a *cure light wounds* spell or a *repair light damage* spell, for example, and a living construct is vulnerable to a *harm* spell. However, spells from the healing subschool provide only half effect to a living construct.

—A living construct responds slightly differently from other living creatures when reduced to 0 hit points. A living construct that has 0 hit points is disabled, just as a living creature is. He can take only a single move action or standard action in each round, but strenuous activity does not risk further injury. When his hit points are less than 0 and greater than –10, a living construct is inert. He is unconscious and helpless, and he cannot perform any actions. However, an inert living construct does not lose additional hit points unless more damage is dealt to him, as with a living creature that is stable.

—Can be raised or resurrected.

—Does not need to eat, sleep, or breathe, but can still benefit from the effects of consumable spells and magic items such as *heroes' feast* and potions.

—Does not need to sleep, but must rest for 8 hours before preparing spells.

Low-Light Vision (Ex): A creature that has low-light vision can see twice as far as a human in starlight, moonlight, torchlight, and similar conditions of shadowy illumination. It retains the ability to distinguish color and detail under these conditions.

Magical Beast Type: Magical beasts are similar to animals but can have Intelligence scores higher than 2. Magical beasts usually have supernatural or extraordinary abilities, but sometimes are merely bizarre in appearance or habits.

Features: A magical beast has the following features.

—10-sided Hit Dice; good Fortitude and Reflex saves.

—Base attack bonus equal to total Hit Dice (as fighter).

—Skill points equal to (2 + Int modifier, minimum 1) per Hit Die, with quadruple skill points for the first Hit Die.

Traits: A magical beast possesses the following traits.

—Darkvision out to 60 feet.

—Low-light vision.

—Proficient with its natural weapons only.

—Proficient with no armor.

—Magical beasts eat, sleep, and breathe.

Magic Strike (Su): Natural weapon attacks made by a creature that has this ability are treated as magic for the purpose of overcoming damage reduction. When it applies, "magic strike" appears in the Atk Options line of a creature's statistics block.

Manufactured Weapons: Some monsters employ manufactured weapons when they attack. In essence, a manufactured weapon is any weapon that is not intrinsic or natural to the creature, including "natural" items such as rocks and logs. Creatures that use manufactured weapons follow the same rules as characters, including those for additional attacks from a high base attack bonus and two-weapon fighting penalties.

Some creatures combine attacks with natural and manufactured weapons when they make a full attack. When they do so, the manufactured weapon attack is considered the primary attack unless the creature's description indicates otherwise, and any natural weapons the creature also uses are considered secondary natural attacks. These secondary attacks do not interfere with the primary attack as attacking with an off-hand weapon does, but they take the usual –5 penalty (or –2 with the Multiattack feat) for such attacks, even if the natural weapon used is normally the creature's primary natural weapon.

Monstrous Humanoid Type: Monstrous humanoids are similar to humanoids, but with monstrous or animalistic features. They often have magical abilities as well.

Features: A monstrous humanoid has the following features.

—8-sided Hit Dice; good Reflex and Will saves.

—Base attack bonus equal to total Hit Dice (as fighter).

—Skill points equal to (2 + Int modifier, minimum 1) per Hit Die, with quadruple skill points for the first Hit Die.

Traits: A monstrous humanoid possesses the following traits.

—Darkvision out to 60 feet.

—Proficient with all simple weapons and any weapons mentioned in its entry.

—Proficient with whatever type of armor (light, medium, or heavy) it is described as wearing, as well as all lighter types. Monstrous humanoids not indicated as wearing armor are not proficient with armor. Monstrous humanoids are proficient with shields if they are proficient with any form of armor.

—Monstrous humanoids eat, sleep, and breathe.

Movement Modes: Creatures can have modes of movement other than walking and running. These are natural, not magical, unless specifically noted in a monster description.

Burrow: A creature that has a burrow speed can tunnel through dirt, but not through rock unless the descriptive text says otherwise. Creatures cannot charge or run while burrowing. Most burrowing creatures do not leave behind tunnels other creatures can use, either because the material they tunnel through fills in behind them or because they do not actually dislocate any material when burrowing.

Climb: A creature that has a climb speed has a +8 racial bonus on Climb checks. The creature must make a Climb check to climb any wall or slope with a DC of more than 0, but it can choose to take 10 (see Checks without Rolls, *PH* 65), even if rushed or threatened when climbing. The creature climbs at the given speed when climbing. If it chooses an accelerated climb (see the Climb skill, *PH* 69), it moves at double the given climb speed or its base land speed, whichever is lower, and makes a single Climb check at a –5 penalty. Creatures cannot run when climbing. A creature that has a climb speed retains its Dexterity bonus to Armor Class (if any) when climbing, and opponents get no special bonus on their attacks against it.

Fly: A creature that has a fly speed can move through the air at the indicated speed if carrying no more than a light load; see Carrying Capacity, *PH* 161. Medium armor does not necessarily constitute a medium load. All fly speeds include a parenthetical note indicating maneuverability (*DMG* 20), as follows:

—Perfect: The creature can perform almost any aerial maneuver it wishes. It moves through the air as well as a human moves over smooth ground.

—Good: The creature is agile in the air (like a housefly or a hummingbird), but cannot change direction as readily as those with perfect maneuverability.

—Average: The creature can fly as adroitly as a small bird.

—Poor: The creature flies as well as a large bird.

—Clumsy: The creature can barely maneuver at all.

A creature that flies can make dive attacks. A dive attack works like a charge, but the diving creature must move a minimum of 30 feet and descend at least 10 feet. It can make only claw or talon attacks, but these deal double damage. A creature can use the run action when flying, provided it flies in a straight line.

Swim: A creature that has a swim speed can move through water at its swim speed without making Swim checks. It has a +8 racial bonus on any Swim check to perform some special action or avoid a hazard. The creature can choose to take 10 on a Swim check, even if distracted or endangered. The creature can use the run action when swimming, provided it swims in a straight line.

Native Subtype: Creatures that have this subtype are outsiders native to the Material Plane. Such creatures have mortal ancestors or a strong connection to the Material Plane, and they can be raised, reincarnated, or resurrected just as other living creatures can be.

Unlike true outsiders, native outsiders need to eat and sleep.

Natural Weapons: Natural weapons are weapons that are physically a part of a creature. A creature making a melee attack with a natural weapon is considered armed and does not provoke attacks of opportunity. Likewise, it threatens any space it can reach.

Creatures do not receive additional attacks from a high base attack bonus when using natural weapons. The number of attacks a creature can make with its natural weapons depends on the type of the attack—a creature can make one bite attack, one attack per claw or tentacle, one gore attack, one sting attack, or one slam attack (although Large creatures that have arms or armlike limbs can make a slam attack with each arm). Refer to the individual monster descriptions.

Unless otherwise noted, a natural weapon threatens a critical hit on a natural attack roll of 20.

When a creature has more than one natural weapon, one of them (or sometimes a pair or set of them) is the primary weapon. All the creature's remaining natural weapons are secondary.

The primary weapon is presented first in the creature's Melee or Ranged entry. A creature's primary natural weapon is its most effective natural attack, and the creature uses its full attack bonus with that weapon. Attacks with secondary natural attacks are made with a –5 penalty on the attack roll, no matter how many the creature has. (Creatures that have the Multiattack feat take only a –2 penalty on secondary attacks.) This penalty applies even when the creature makes a single attack with the secondary attack as part of the attack action or as an attack of opportunity. A creature applies half of its Strength bonus (if any) to damage dealt by a secondary attack, even when the secondary attack is used alone as a single attack.

Natural weapons have types just as other weapons do. The most common are summarized below.

Bite: The creature attacks with its mouth, dealing piercing, slashing, and bludgeoning damage.

Claw or Talon: The creature rips with a sharp appendage, dealing piercing and slashing damage.

Gore: The creature spears the opponent with an antler, horn, or similar appendage, dealing piercing damage.

Slap or Slam: The creature batters opponents with an appendage, dealing bludgeoning damage.

Sting: The creature stabs with a stinger, dealing piercing damage. Sting attacks usually deal damage from poison in addition to hit point damage.

Tentacle: The creature flails at opponents with a powerful tentacle, dealing bludgeoning (and sometimes slashing) damage.

Nonabilities: Some creatures lack certain ability scores. These creatures do not have an ability score of 0—they lack the ability altogether. The modifier for a nonability is +0. Other effects of nonabilities are detailed below.

Strength: Any creature that can physically manipulate other objects has at least 1 point of Strength. A creature that has no Strength score can't exert force, usually because it has no physical body or because it doesn't move. The creature automatically fails Strength checks. If the creature can attack, it applies its Dexterity modifier to its base attack bonus instead of a Strength modifier.

Dexterity: Any creature that can move has at least 1 point of Dexterity. A creature that has no Dexterity score can't move. If it can perform actions (such as casting spells), it applies its Intelligence modifier to initiative checks instead of its Dexterity modifier. The creature automatically fails Reflex saves and Dexterity checks.

Constitution: Any living creature has at least 1 point of Constitution. A creature that has no Constitution has no body or no metabolism. It is immune to any effect that requires a Fortitude save unless the effect works on objects or is harmless. The creature is also immune to ability damage, ability drain, and energy drain, and automatically fails Constitution checks. A creature that has no Constitution cannot tire and is thusly immune to fatigue and exhaustion.

Intelligence: Any creature that can think, learn, or remember has at least 1 point of Intelligence. A creature that has no Intelligence score is mindless, an automaton operating on simple instincts or programmed instructions. Such a creature is immune to mind-affecting spells and abilities and automatically fails Intelligence checks.

Mindless creatures do not gain feats or skills, although they can have bonus feats or racial skill bonuses.

Wisdom: Any creature that can perceive its environment in any fashion has at least 1 point of Wisdom. Anything with no Wisdom score is an object, not a creature. Only objects have no Wisdom score, and an object that has no Wisdom score also has no Charisma score.

Charisma: Any creature capable of telling the difference between itself and other creatures and objects has at least 1 point of Charisma. Only objects have no Charisma score, and an object that has no Charisma score also has no Wisdom score.

Obyrith Subtype: A number of demons belong to the primeval race of evil outsiders known as the obyriths.

Traits: An obyrith has the following traits.

—True Seeing (Su): An obyrith is under the constant effect of *true seeing*, as the spell. This effect cannot be dispelled.

—Telepathy.

—Fast Healing (Ex): All obyriths have fast healing in an amount indicated in each creature's entry.

—Immunity to poison and mind-affecting spells and abilities.

—Resistance to acid 10, cold 10, electricity 10, and fire 10.

—Form of Madness (Su): Obyriths are so noxious and horrific that their presence produces madness. When an obyrith comes within 60 feet of a creature, that creature must succeed on a Will save (DC 10 + 1/2 the obyrith's HD + its Cha modifier) or fall victim to a form of permanent insanity as indicated in the specific obyrith's description. The insanity is permanent until cured by *greater restoration, heal, miracle,* or *wish*. A creature that successfully saves cannot be affected again by that same obyrith's form for 24 hours, and a creature that fails can only be affected once until cured. Chaotic evil outsiders are immune to this ability. This is a mind-affecting ability.

Ooze Type: An ooze is an amorphous or mutable creature, usually mindless.

Features: An ooze has the following features.

—10-sided Hit Dice; no good saving throws.

—Base attack bonus equal to 3/4 total Hit Dice (as cleric).

—Skill points equal to (2 + Int modifier, minimum 1) per Hit Die, with quadruple skill points for the first Hit Die, if the ooze has an Intelligence score. However, most oozes are mindless and gain no skill points or feats.

Traits: An ooze possesses the following traits.

—Blind.

—Blindsight to a range indicated in the creature's entry.

—Immunity to critical hits, paralysis, poison, *sleep* effects, polymorph, and stunning.

—Not subject to flanking.

—Some oozes have the ability to deal acid damage to objects. In such a case, the amount of damage is equal to 10 + 1/2 ooze's HD + ooze's Con modifier per full round of contact.

—Proficient with its natural weapons only.

—Proficient with no armor.

—Mindless: Oozes have no Intelligence score, along with the traits associated with that nonability.

—Oozes eat and breathe, but do not sleep.

Outsider Type: An outsider is a creature at least partially composed of the essence of some plane other than the Material Plane. Some creatures start out as with another type and become outsiders when they attain a higher (or lower) state of spiritual existence.

Features: An outsider has the following features.

—8-sided Hit Dice; good Fortitude, Reflex, and Will saves.

—Base attack bonus equal to total Hit Dice (as fighter).

—Skill points equal to (8 + Int modifier, minimum 1) per Hit Die, with quadruple skill points for the first Hit Die.

Traits: An outsider possesses the following traits.

—Darkvision out to 60 feet.

—Unlike most other living creatures, an outsider's soul and body form one unit. When an outsider is slain, no soul is set loose. Spells that restore souls to their bodies, such as *raise dead, reincarnate,* and *resurrection,* don't work on an outsider. It takes a different magical effect, such as *limited wish, wish, miracle,* or *true resurrection* to restore a slain outsider to life. Outsiders that have the native subtype are exceptions to this rule.

—Proficient with all simple and martial weapons and any weapons mentioned in its entry.

—Proficient with whatever type of armor (light, medium, or heavy) it is described as wearing, as well as all lighter types. Outsiders not indicated as wearing armor are not proficient with armor. Outsiders are proficient with shields if they are proficient with any form of armor.

—Outsiders breathe, but only native outsiders need to eat and sleep.

Paralysis (Ex or Su): This special attack renders the victim unable to take physical action. Paralyzed creatures cannot move, speak, or take any physical actions. The creature is rooted to the spot, frozen and helpless. Paralysis works on the body, and a character can usually resist it with a Fortitude saving throw (the DC is given in the creature's description). Unlike *hold person* and similar effects, a paralysis effect does not allow a new save each round. A winged creature flying in the air at the time that it is paralyzed cannot flap its wings and falls. A swimmer can't swim and might drown.

Plant Type: This type comprises creatures composed of vegetable matter that have Wisdom and Charisma scores. Plants that lack Wisdom and Charisma scores are objects even though they are alive.

Features: A plant creature has the following features.

—8-sided Hit Dice; good Fortitude saves.

—Base attack bonus equal to 3/4 total Hit Dice (as cleric).

—Skill points equal to (2 + Int modifier, minimum 1) per Hit Die, with quadruple skill points for the first Hit Die, if the plant creature has an Intelligence score. However, some plant creatures are mindless and gain no skill points or feats.

Traits: A plant creature possesses the following traits.

—Low-light vision.

—Immunity to critical hits, mind-affecting spells and abilities, paralysis, poison, polymorph, *sleep* effects, and stunning.

—Proficient with its natural weapons only.

—Proficient with no armor.

—Plants breathe and eat, but do not sleep.

Poison (Ex): Poison attacks deal initial damage, such as ability damage or some other effect, to the opponent on a failed Fortitude save. Unless otherwise noted, another saving throw is required 1 minute later, regardless of the first save's result, to avoid secondary damage. A creature's descriptive text provides the details.

A creature that has a poison attack is immune to its own poison and the poison of others of its kind.

The Fortitude save DC against a poison attack is equal to 10 + 1/2 poisoning creature's racial HD + poisoning creature's Con modifier. A successful save negates the damage.

Pounce (Ex): When a creature that has this special attack charges, it can still make a full attack, including rake attacks for creatures that have the rake ability.

Powerful Charge (Ex): When a creature that has this special attack makes a charge, its attack deals extra damage in addition to the normal benefits and hazards of a charge.

Psionics (Sp): These are spell-like abilities that a creature generates with the power of its mind. Psionic abilities are usually usable at will.

Racial Hit Dice: These are Hit Dice a monster has by virtue of what type of creature it is. Hit Dice gained from taking class levels are not racial Hit Dice. For example, the kuo-toa monitor described in this book is a 6 HD creature because of its four levels of monk, but it has 2 racial Hit Dice (the same number as a typical kuo-toa without any class levels).

Rake (Ex): A creature that has this special attack gains extra natural attacks when it grapples its foe. Normally, a monster can attack with only one of its natural weapons when grappling, but a creature that has the rake ability usually gains two additional claw attacks that it can use only against a grappled foe. Rake attacks are not subject to the usual –4 penalty for attacking with a natural weapon in a grapple.

A monster with the rake ability must begin its turn grappling to use its rake—it can't begin a grapple and rake in the same turn.

Ray (Su or Sp): This form of special attack works like a ranged attack (see Aiming a Spell, *PH* 175). Hitting with a ray attack requires a successful ranged touch attack roll, ignoring armor, natural armor, and shield and using the creature's ranged attack bonus. Ray attacks have no range increment.

Regeneration (Ex): Damage dealt to creature that has this ability is treated as nonlethal damage. The creature heals nonlethal damage at a fixed rate per round, as given in its entry—for example, a creature that has regeneration 5 recovers 5 points of nonlethal damage per round. Certain attack forms, typically fire and acid, deal a regenerating creature lethal damage, which regeneration can't heal.

A regenerating creature that has been rendered unconscious through nonlethal damage can be killed with a coup de grace (*PH* 153). If the attack used to deliver a coup de grace is of a type that regeneration converts to nonlethal damage, the coup de grace fails to kill the regenerating creature.

Attack forms that don't deal hit point damage ignore regeneration. Regeneration does not restore hit points lost from starvation, thirst, or suffocation.

Regenerating creatures can regrow lost portions of their bodies and can reattach severed limbs or body parts. Severed parts that are not reattached die and wither normally.

A creature must have a Constitution score to have the regeneration ability.

Rend (Ex): If a creature that has this special attack hits with the specified natural attack, it latches onto the opponent's body and tears the flesh. The rend attack deals damage equal to that dealt by the creature's natural attack + 1-1/2 times its Str modifier.

Reptilian Subtype: These creatures are scaly and usually cold-blooded. The reptilian subtype is used only to describe a set of humanoid races, not all animals and monsters that are truly reptiles.

Resistance to Energy (Ex): A creature that has this special quality ignores a specified amount of damage of the indicated type each time it takes damage of that type. The entry indicates the amount and type of damage ignored. For example, Dalmosh has resistance to fire 10, so he ignores the first 10 points of fire damage dealt to him anytime he takes fire damage.

Scent (Ex): This special quality allows a creature to detect approaching enemies, sniff out hidden foes, and track by sense of smell. Creatures that have the scent ability can identify familiar odors just as humans do familiar sights.

The creature can detect opponents within 30 feet by sense of smell. If the opponent is upwind, the range increases to 60 feet; if downwind, it drops to 15 feet. Strong scents, such as smoke or rotting garbage, can be detected at twice those ranges. Overpowering scents, such as skunk musk or troglodyte stench, can be detected at triple normal range.

When a creature detects a scent, the exact location of the source is not revealed—only its presence somewhere within range. The creature can take a move action to note the direction of the scent. Whenever the creature comes within 5 feet of the source, the creature pinpoints that source's location.

A creature that has the Track feat and the scent ability can follow tracks by smell, making a Wisdom or Survival check to find or follow a trail. The base DC for a fresh trail is 10, no matter what kind of surface holds the scent. For each hour that the trail is cold, the DC increases by 2. The ability otherwise follows the rules for the Track feat, but creatures tracking by scent ignore the effects of surface conditions and poor visibility.

Size: The nine size categories, in ascending order, are Fine, Diminutive, Tiny, Small, Medium, Large, Huge, Gargantuan, and Colossal. A creature's size provides a modifier to its Armor Class and attack bonus, a modifier on grapple checks it attempts, and a modifier on Hide checks. The Creature Sizes table provides a summary of the attributes that apply to each size category.

Sonic Attacks (Su): Unless otherwise noted, a sonic attack follows the rules for spreads (see Aiming a Spell, *PH* 175). The range of the spread is measured from the creature using the sonic attack. Once a sonic attack has taken effect, deafening the subject or stopping its ears does not end the effect. Stopping one's ears ahead of time allows opponents to avoid having to make saving throws against mind-affecting sonic attacks, but not other kinds of sonic attacks, such as those that deal damage. Stopping one's ears is a full-round action and requires wax or other soundproof material to stuff into the ears.

Spell-Like (Sp) Abilities: Spell-like abilities are magical and work like spells, though they are not spells and so have no

CREATURE SIZES

Size Category	AC/Attack Modifier	Grapple Modifier	Hide Modifier	Dimension*	Weight**	Space (in squares)	Reach (Tall) (in squares)	Reach (Long) (in squares)
Fine	+8	–16	+16	6 in. or less	1/8 lb. or less	1/2 ft. (1/100)	0 ft. (0)	—
Diminutive	+4	–12	+12	6 in.–1 ft.	1/8 lb. – 1 lb.	1 ft. (1/25)	0 ft. (0)	—
Tiny	+2	–8	+8	1 ft.–2 ft.	1 – 8 lb.	2-1/2 ft. (1/4)	0 ft. (0)	—
Small	+1	–4	+4	2 ft.–4 ft.	8 – 60 lb.	5 ft. (1)	5 ft. (1)	—
Medium	+0	+0	+0	4 ft.–8 ft.	60 – 500 lb.	5 ft. (1)	5 ft. (1)	5 ft. (1)
Large	–1	+4	–4	8 ft.–16 ft.	500 – 4,000 lb.	10 ft. (2 × 2)	10 ft. (2)	5 ft. (1)
Huge	–2	+8	–8	16 ft.–32 ft.	2 – 16 tons	15 ft. (3 × 3)	15 ft. (3)	10 ft. (2)
Gargantuan	–4	+12	–12	32 ft.–64 ft.	16 – 125 tons	20 ft. (4 × 4)	20 ft. (4)	15 ft. (3)
Colossal	–8	+16	–16	64 ft. or more	125 tons or more	30 ft.+ (6 × 6+)	30 ft.+ (6+)	20 ft.+ (4+)

* Biped's height, quadruped's body length (nose to base of tail).

** Assumes that the creature is roughly as dense as a regular animal. A creature made of stone weighs considerably more. A gaseous creature weighs much less.

verbal, somatic, material, focus, or XP components. They go away in an *antimagic field* and are subject to spell resistance if the spell the ability resembles or duplicates would be subject to spell resistance.

A spell-like ability usually has a limit on how often it can be used, but one that can be used at will has no such limit. Using a spell-like ability is a standard action unless noted otherwise, and doing so when threatened provokes attacks of opportunity. It is possible to make a Concentration check to use a spell-like ability defensively and avoid provoking attacks of opportunity, just as when casting a spell. A spell-like ability can be disrupted just as a spell can be. Spell-like abilities cannot be used to counterspell, nor can they be counterspelled.

For creatures that have spell-like abilities, a designated caster level defines how difficult it is to dispel their spell-like effects and to define any level-dependent variables (such as range and duration) the abilities might have. The creature's caster level never affects which spell-like abilities the creature has; sometimes the given caster level is lower than the level a spellcasting character would need to cast the spell of the same name. If no caster level is specified, the caster level is equal to the creature's Hit Dice.

The saving throw (if any) against a spell-like ability is 10 + the level of the spell the ability resembles or duplicates + the creature's Cha modifier.

Some spell-like abilities duplicate spells that work differently when cast by characters of different classes—for example, *true seeing*. A monster's spell-like abilities are presumed to be the sorcerer/wizard versions. If the spell in question is not a sorcerer/wizard spell, then default to cleric, druid, bard, paladin, and ranger, in that order.

Spell Resistance (Ex): A creature that has spell resistance can avoid the effects of spells and spell-like abilities that directly affect it. To determine if a spell or spell-like ability works against a creature that has spell resistance, the caster must make a caster level check (1d20 + caster level). If the result equals or exceeds the creature's spell resistance, the spell works normally, although the creature is still allowed a saving throw.

Spells: Sometimes a creature can cast arcane or divine spells just as a member of a spellcasting class can (and can activate magic items accordingly). Such creatures are subject to the same spellcasting rules that characters are, except as follows.

A spellcasting creature that lacks hands or arms can provide any somatic component a spell might require by moving its body. Such a creature still needs material components for its spells. The creature can cast the spell by either touching a required component that is not in another creature's possession or having the required component on its body. Sometimes spellcasting creatures utilize the Eschew Materials feat to avoid some material components.

A spellcasting creature is not actually a member of a class unless its entry says so, and it does not gain any class features. For example, a creature that casts arcane spells as a sorcerer cannot acquire a familiar. A creature that has access to cleric spells must prepare them in the normal manner and receives domain spells if noted, but it does not receive domain granted powers unless it has at least one level in the cleric class.

Summon (Sp): A creature that has the summon ability can summon specific other creatures of its kind, as if it were casting a *summon monster* spell, but it usually has only a limited chance of success. Roll d%. On a failure, no creature answers the summons. Summoned creatures return whence they came after 1 hour. A creature that has just been summoned cannot use its own summon ability for 1 hour.

Most creatures that have the ability to summon do not use it lightly, since it leaves them beholden to the summoned creature. In general, they use it only when necessary to save their own lives.

An appropriate spell level is given for each summoning ability for the purpose of resolving Concentration checks and attempts to dispel the summoned creature. Summoned monsters are part of the summoning creature's Challenge Rating and worth no experience points (see DMG 37).

Supernatural (Su) Abilities: Supernatural abilities are magical and go away in an *antimagic field,* but they are not subject to spell resistance. Supernatural abilities cannot be dispelled. Using a supernatural ability is a standard action unless noted otherwise. Supernatural abilities might have a use limit or be usable at will, just like spell-like abilities. However, supernatural abilities do not provoke attacks of opportunity and never require Concentration checks. A supernatural ability usually has an effective caster level equal to the creature's Hit Dice.

The saving throw DC for a supernatural ability is 10 + 1/2 the creature's HD + the creature's ability modifier (usually Charisma).

Swallow Whole (Ex): If a creature that has this special attack begins its turn with an opponent held in its mouth, it can attempt a new grapple check. If it succeeds, it swallows that foe, dealing normal damage for a bite. The opponent must usually be smaller than the swallowing creature.

Being swallowed has various consequences, depending on the creature doing the swallowing. A swallowed opponent is considered to be grappled, but the creature that did the swallowing is not. The swallowed opponent can try to cut its way free with any light slashing or piercing weapon, or it can try to escape the grapple. Inside a creature, its Armor Class is normally 10 + 1/2 its natural armor bonus, with no modifiers for size or Dexterity. If the swallowed opponent escapes the grapple, it ends up back in the attacker's mouth, where it can be bitten or swallowed again.

Swarm Subtype: A swarm is a collection of Fine, Diminutive, or Tiny creatures that acts as a single creature. A swarm has the characteristics of its type, except as noted here. A swarm has a single pool of Hit Dice and hit points, a single initiative modifier, a single speed, and a single Armor Class. A swarm makes saving throws as a single creature.

A single swarm occupies a square (if it is made up of nonflying creatures) or a cube (of flying creatures) 10 feet on a side, but its reach is 0 feet, like its component creatures. To attack, it moves into an opponent's space, which provokes attacks of opportunity. It can occupy the same space as a creature of any size, since it crawls over or flies around its prey. A swarm can move through squares occupied by enemies, and vice versa, without impediment, although the swarm provokes attacks of opportunity if it does so. A swarm can move through cracks or holes large enough for its component creatures.

A swarm of Tiny creatures consists of 300 nonflying creatures or 1,000 flying creatures. A swarm of Diminutive creatures consists of 1,500 nonflying creatures or 5,000 flying creatures. A swarm of Fine creatures consists of 10,000 creatures, flying or not. Swarms of nonflying creatures include many more creatures than could normally fit in a 10-foot square based on their normal space, because creatures in a swarm are packed tightly together and crawl over each other and their prey when moving or attacking. Larger swarms are represented by multiples of single swarms. The area occupied by a large swarm is completely shapeable, though the swarm usually remains in contiguous squares.

Traits: A swarm has no clear front or back and no discernible anatomy, so it is not subject to critical hits or flanking. A swarm made up of Tiny creatures takes half damage from slashing and piercing weapons. A swarm composed of Fine or Diminutive creatures is immune to all weapon damage.

Reducing a swarm to 0 hit points or lower causes it to break up, though damage taken until that point does not degrade its ability to attack or resist attack. Swarms are never staggered or reduced to a dying state by damage. Also, they cannot be tripped, grappled, or bull rushed, and they cannot grapple.

A swarm is immune to any spell or effect that targets a specific number of creatures, including single-target spells such as *disintegrate,* with the exception of mind-affecting spells and abilities if the swarm has an Intelligence score and a hive mind. A swarm takes half again as much damage (+50%) from area spells and area effects.

Swarms made up of Diminutive or Fine creatures are susceptible to high winds such as that created by a *gust of wind* spell. For the purpose of determining the effect of wind on a swarm, treat the swarm as a creature of the same size as its constituent creatures (see Winds, *DMG* 95). Wind effects deal 1d6 points of nonlethal damage to a swarm per spell level—or Hit Dice of the originating creature, in the case of effects such as an air elemental's whirlwind. A swarm rendered unconscious by means of nonlethal damage becomes disorganized and dispersed, and does not re-form until its hit points exceed its nonlethal damage.

Swarm Attack: Creatures that have the swarm subtype don't make standard melee attacks. Instead, they deal damage to any creature whose space they occupy at the end of their move, with no attack roll needed. Swarm attacks are not subject to a miss chance for concealment or cover. A swarm's statistics block has "swarm" in the Melee entry, with no attack bonus given. The amount of damage a swarm deals is based on its Hit Dice: 1–5 HD, 1d6; 6–10 HD, 2d6; 11–15 HD, 3d6; 16–20 HD, 4d6; and 21 HD or more, 5d6.

A swarm's attacks are nonmagical, unless the swarm's description states otherwise. Damage reduction sufficient to reduce a swarm attack's damage to 0, incorporeality, and other special abilities usually give a creature immunity or resistance to damage from a swarm. Swarms can have special attacks in addition to swarm damage.

Swarms do not threaten creatures, and they do not make attacks of opportunity with their swarm attack. However, they distract foes whose squares they occupy, as described below.

Distraction (Ex): Any living creature vulnerable to a swarm's damage that begins its turn with a swarm in its square is nauseated for 1 round. A Fortitude save (DC 10 + 1/2 swarm's HD + swarm's Con modifier) negates the effect.

Spellcasting or concentrating on spells within the area of a swarm requires a Concentration check (DC 20 + spell level). Using skills that involve patience and concentration requires a DC 20 Concentration check.

Tanar'ri Subtype: A large number of demons belong to the race of evil outsiders known as the tanar'ri.

Traits: A tanar'ri possesses the following traits.

—Telepathy.

—Immunity to electricity and poison.

—Resistance to acid 10, cold 10, and fire 10.

—Summon (Sp): Tanar'ri share the ability to summon others of their kind.

Telepathy (Su): A creature that has this ability can communicate telepathically with any other creature within a certain range (usually 100 feet) that has a language. It is possible to address multiple creatures at once telepathically, although maintaining a telepathic conversation with more than one creature at a time is just as difficult as simultaneously speaking and listening to multiple people at the same time.

Trample (Ex): As a full-round action, a creature that has this special attack can move up to twice its speed and literally run over any opponents at least one size category smaller than itself. The creature merely has to move over the opponents in its path; any creature whose space is completely covered by the trampling creature's space is subject to the trample attack.

If a target's space is larger than 5 feet, it is considered trampled only if the trampling creature moves over all the squares it occupies. If the trampling creature moves over only some of a target's space, the target can make an attack of opportunity against the trampling creature at a –4 penalty. A trampling creature that accidentally ends its movement in an illegal space returns to the last legal position it occupied, or the closest legal position, if there's a legal position that's closer.

A trample attack deals bludgeoning damage (the creature's slam damage + 1-1/2 times its Str modifier).

Trampled opponents can attempt attacks of opportunity, but these take a –4 penalty. If they do not make attacks of opportunity, trampled opponents can attempt Reflex saves to take half damage. The save DC against a creature's trample attack is 10 + 1/2 creature's HD + creature's Str modifier (the exact DC is given in the creature's descriptive text). A trampling creature can deal trampling damage to each target only once per round, no matter how many times its movement takes it over a target creature.

Tremorsense (Ex): A creature that has tremorsense is sensitive to vibrations in the ground and can automatically pinpoint the location of anything that is in contact with the ground. Aquatic creatures that have tremorsense can also sense the location of creatures moving through water.

Turn Resistance (Ex): A creature that has this special quality (usually an undead) is less easily affected by clerics or paladins (see Turn or Rebuke Undead, *PH* 159). When resolving a turn, rebuke, command, or bolster attempt, add the indicated number to the creature's Hit Dice total. For example, a forest haunt has 12 Hit Dice and +2 turn resistance. Attempts to turn, rebuke, command, or bolster treat the forest haunt as though it had 14 Hit Dice, though it is a 12 HD creature for any other purpose.

Typical Treasure: This entry in a monster description describes how much wealth a creature owns. (See *DMG* 52–56 for details about treasure, particularly Tables 3–5 through 3–8.) Most monsters keep their treasure in their lairs, leaving it behind if they travel. Intelligent creatures carry useful portable treasure, such as magic items, with them.

Undead Type: Undead are once-living creatures animated by spiritual or supernatural forces.

Features: An undead creature has the following features.

—12-sided Hit Dice; good Will saves.

—Base attack bonus equal to 1/2 total Hit Dice (as wizard).

—Skill points equal to (4 + Int modifier, minimum 1) per Hit Die, with quadruple skill points for the first Hit Die, if the undead creature has an Intelligence score. However, many undead are mindless and gain no skill points or feats.

Traits: An undead creature possesses the following traits.

—Darkvision out to 60 feet.

—Cannot heal damage on its own if it has no Intelligence score, although it can be healed. Negative energy (such as an *inflict* spell) can heal undead creatures. The fast healing special quality works regardless of the creature's Intelligence score.

—Immunity to ability damage to its physical ability scores, ability drain, critical hits, death effects, disease, energy drain, exhaustion, fatigue, mind-affecting spells and abilities, nonlethal damage, paralysis, poison, *sleep* effects, and stunning.

—Immunity to any effect that requires a Fortitude save, unless the effect also works on objects or is harmless.

—Not at risk of death from massive damage (*PH* 145). Immediately destroyed when reduced to 0 hit points or fewer.

—Not affected by *raise dead* and *reincarnate* spells or abilities. *Resurrection* and *true resurrection* can affect undead creatures. These spells turn undead creatures back into the living creatures they were before becoming undead.

—No Constitution score.

—Uses its Charisma modifier for Concentration checks.

—Proficient with its natural weapons, all simple weapons, and any weapons mentioned in its entry.

—Proficient with whatever type of armor (light, medium, or heavy) it is described as wearing, as well as all lighter types. Undead not indicated as wearing armor are not proficient with armor. Undead are proficient with shields if they are proficient with any form of armor.

—Undead do not breathe, eat, or sleep.

Vermin Type: This type includes insects, arachnids, other arthropods, worms, and similar invertebrates.

Features: Vermin have the following features.

—8-sided Hit Dice; good Fortitude saves.

—Base attack bonus equal to 3/4 total Hit Dice (as cleric).

—Skill points equal to (2 + Int modifier, minimum 1) per Hit Die, with quadruple skill points for the first Hit Die, if the vermin has an Intelligence score. However, most vermin are mindless and gain no skill points or feats.

Traits: Vermin possess the following traits.

—Darkvision out to 60 feet.

—Mindless: No Intelligence score, and immunity to all mind-affecting spells and abilities.

—Proficient with their natural weapons only.

—Proficient with no armor.

—Vermin breathe, eat, and sleep.

Vulnerability to Energy: Some creatures have vulnerability to a certain type of energy. Such a creature takes half again as much (+50%) damage as normal from effects that employ that energy, regardless of whether a saving throw is allowed, or if the save is a success or failure.

Water Subtype: This subtype usually is used for elementals and outsiders with a connection to the Elemental Plane of Water. Creatures that have the water subtype have swim speeds and can move in water without making Swim checks. A water creature can breathe underwater and can usually breathe air as well.

MONSTERS BY TYPE (AND SUBTYPE)

Aberration: Ethereal defiler, madcrafter of Thoon, shadow flayer, spirrax, Thoon disciple, Thoon elder brain, vivesector.

(Air): Ken-sun (elemental mage), ruin chanter.

(Aquatic): Kuo-toas (all).

(Baatezu): Gulthir devil, remmanon devil.

(Chaotic): Dalmosh, demons (all).

(Cold): Morlicantha,

Construct: Force golem, magmacore golem, merchurion, scouring slinger, scouring stanchion, scyther of Thoon, shardsoul slayer, slinger scorpion, stormcloud of Thoon, Thoon hulk, Thoon soldier.

Dragon: Chorranathau, Morlicantha.

(Dragonblood): Greenspawn zealot.

(Earth): Ken-kuni (elemental mage), ruin chanter, ruin elemental.

Elemental: Ruin elemental, spawn of Juiblex (all).

(Evil): Dalmosh, demons (all), devils (all), ember guard, Illurien.

(Extraplanar): Arcadian avenger, Dalmosh, demons (all), demonthorn mandrake, devils (all), ember guard, ethereal defiler, garngrath, Illurien, siege beetle, spawn of Juiblex (all), spirrax, steelwing.

Fey: Banshrae, frostwind virago, jaebrin, master of the hunt, ruin chanter, shaedling.

(Fire): Ember guard, ken-li (elemental mage).

Giant: Bladerager troll, elemental magi (all).

(Goblinoid): Hobgoblins (all).

(Good): Arcadian avenger.

Humanoid: Hobgoblin duskblade, Nozgûg (god-blooded orc), Singh the Immense.

(Incorporeal): Haunts (all).

(Lawful): Arcadian avenger, devils (all), ember guard.

(Living Construct): Merchurion.

Magical Beast: Deadborn vulture, garngrath, gem scarab, guulvorg, hound of the hunt, malastor, mockery bugs (all), rylkars (all), steelwing, Thrym hound, tirbanas (all), tusk terror.

Monstrous Humanoid: Greenspawn zealot, hobgoblin spellscourge, hobgoblin warcaster, hobgoblin warsoul, kuo-toas (all), Thoon infiltrator, Thoon thrall, ushemoi (all).

(Obyrith): Draudnu demon.

Ooze: Graveyard sludge.

(Orc): Nozgûg (god-blooded orc).

Outsider: Arcadian avenger, Dalmosh, demons (all), devils (all), ember guard, Illurien.

Plant: Burrow root, demonthorn mandrake, fetid fungus, verdant reaver, vinespawn.

(Swarm): Rylkspawn swarm (rylkar).

(Tanar'ri): Adaru demon, gadacro demon, solamith demon.

Undead: Blackwing, bonespur, bridge haunt, forest haunt, Kugan (phantom ghast), sanguineous drinker, serpentir, skull lord, spectral rider, taunting haunt, vampires (all), deadborn vulture zombie.

Vermin: Siege beetle.

(Water): Spawn of Juiblex (all).